

Council (PBEC), and the Pacific Economic Co-operation Conference (PECC). Significant strides are being taken in APEC toward closer regional co-operation. Canada is fully supportive of, and actively engaged in, its work program. We see particular significance in two developments at the Senior Officials Meeting held in Korea a few weeks ago, in preparation for the Ministerial Meeting in Seoul in October. These are the decision to include in the work program the question of how regional and global trade liberalization can be advanced by the countries of APEC, and the initiation of broad economic policy dialogue among APEC members. Canada will be taking the lead in convening a group on the latter.

In stressing the economic dimension of security, I am not trying to upstage APEC or create a mini-APEC in the North Pacific. We in Canada are strongly supportive of APEC and the other mechanisms in Asia Pacific that are enhancing economic links and economic co-operation through dialogue. The experience of these discussions shows how useful such dialogue can be in dealing with regional economic issues. At the same time, APEC is young and still finding its way. It faces important challenges in the economic area to which it needs to be able to give its undivided attention. Its work is relevant to co-operative security because co-operative security has an important economic dimension, but the dialogue it has so effectively begun is not, in terms of either issues or participants, the one I have suggested we examine for the North Pacific.

I hope that you will have some stimulating and imaginative ideas about the role regional dialogue might play in addressing these challenges. The diversity of a region does require us to be sensitive to differing national experiences and different visions of the future. The examples of APEC and PECC, however, demonstrate that diversity need not be an impediment to co-operation. Success in advancing co-operative security in the North Pacific could serve as a model for other regions.

Perhaps these few words give you some sense of the thinking that has motivated Canada in seeking to promote a co-operative security dialogue in the North Pacific. Last July, I had suggested that we begin to explore the prospects for a more co-operative approach to the security of our sub-region, in the first instance at the non-governmental level -- an NGO track. I am pleased that you are taking part in that first exploration.

You are here as recognized experts in your fields of study to begin your own, independent, discussion and study of the concept of co-operative security. Your program is built around a group of policy research themes that I