

Jasper, we suggested to ASEAN foreign ministers that they consider security issues for the agenda of the annual ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference -- the PMC. Two years ago at the 1991 ASEAN-PMC, I spoke openly about Canada's interest in discussing security issues with our partners. Many in ASEAN also sensed the sea change in international security issues and the need for new approaches.

As you know, in 1992 the ASEAN-PMC did place regional security issues on its agenda. This dialogue was expanded through the recent decision by ASEAN to host security discussions with ASEAN and Dialogue Partner senior officials outside the PMC.

Even more broadly, Canada is consolidating a consistent and balanced involvement in the region that addresses not only political and security issues, but also trade and economic questions.

In promoting dialogue, we have focused on our strengths:

- We have used our multilateral credentials to advantage, for example, through our activities in APEC to seek greater inclusiveness and institutionalization, as the process of multilateral co-operation matures.
- We have also used our official development assistance to work with others to foster dialogue on regional issues -- the Spratly Islands question has been a prominent case in point.
- We are prepared to use imagination and flexibility to defuse tensions or to advance co-operation in arms control and disarmament issues, and participation in regional policy planning discussions.

For example, Canada recently called for a moratorium on nuclear weapons testing, an issue of great concern to China's neighbours and the Asian subcontinent.

Another example is the Canada-Japan Forum 2000, which conducted a comprehensive review of the Canada-Japan bilateral relationship and potential joint approaches to multilateral issues. The recommendations of the forum, now under active consideration by the two governments, include a call for the creation of a Joint Centre for Conflict Prevention and Resolution on Vancouver Island, which could eventually draw wider participation by other countries in Asia Pacific and elsewhere.