

This list points to a third observation. And that is that while the end of the Cold War in Europe does not mean the end of conflict in Asia and in the Pacific, it does present the opportunity to move forward. The reduction in superpower tension presents the prospect of superpower co-operation in solving regional conflicts. Unhelpful intervention can be replaced by helpful co-operation. Countries of the region, while freer to fight local battles are also freer to seek their own solutions to their own problems. This is a challenge and an opportunity we must not let pass.

For decades, Canada has been preoccupied with constructing an Atlantic community. That community has been built. It is successful. It will endure. Now is the time to also turn our energies to strengthening the Pacific community, a community of common action, common purpose and common values.

Canada has a Pacific past. For centuries, our missionaries and our traders have plied the Pacific. Canadian lives have been lost on Asian battlefields. Indeed the last major war fought by Canada was not in Europe but in Korea. And our commitment to peacekeeping is based to a large extent on experiences and expertise we acquired in this region.

But Canada has an even more important Pacific future. Over half of Canada's new citizens are now come from Asia, and Canada has become a principal destination for Asian refugees.

And of course, there are the links of trade and investment. Of all the 24 members of the OECD, Canada is the most dependent on its trading relationship with Asia. More so than the United States, more so even than Australia. In 1983, Canadian trade across the Pacific outpaced our trade across the Atlantic. The Canadian Western province of British Columbia now trades more across the Pacific than it does with the United States with which it shares a land border.

So when I speak of Pacific prosperity and Pacific peace, I am also speaking of Canadian prosperity and Canadian peace.

I noted earlier the absence of co-ordinating economic institutions in this region. The Pacific has managed quite well without such institutions in the past. It is tempting to say that it can continue to do so in the future.