

transparency; and (4) building an international and regional order predicated on democracy, rule of law, good governance, and respects for human rights.⁵

Since the 1980s, Canadian policy toward the Asia-Pacific region has evolved in a number of important ways. First has been a greater focus on establishing and strengthening bilateral relationships with the major regional powers/players -- China, Japan, South Korea, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), through concerted efforts at expanding diplomatic/official, commercial, academic, social, and cultural contacts. Second, there have been more conscious efforts in better use of the official development assistance (ODA) to promote Canadian commercial interests, as well as to assist recipient countries' economic development. Third, Ottawa has tried to avoid direct entanglement in the region's military/security issues except participation within broader international (UN) commitments and occasional military exercises with allies/friendly countries. Fourth, Ottawa has encouraged the establishment of linkage and exchanges between domestic research institutes and their counterparts in the region. Finally, immigrants are encouraged from the region.⁶

Meanwhile, there have been sea changes in the Asia Pacific since the end of the Cold War. Prominent among them are the growing economic interdependence and proliferation of trans-Pacific trade & investment. This has been paralleled by the establishment and deepening of nascent institutions such as APEC and the Pacific Economic Council for Cooperation (PECC). At the same time, the end of superpower rivalry in the region, and growing domestic economic difficulties weaken the US commitment to continuously provide leadership and resources for the defense of allies and friends; this in turn creates uncertainty and a potential power vacuum. There has been a recognition that continued economic growth depends on stability and management of potential tensions and conflicts. Therefore, Canadian interests must be the introduction and promotion of cooperative security and arms control agendas. The North Pacific Cooperative Security Dialogue (NPCSD) represents such an effort.

As much as Canada was mindful of the fact that the absence of multilateral alliance in Asia Pacific left the region with few building blocks to reorient post-Cold War security structure, it was equally cognizant that the different setting in Asia Pacific suggested that multilateralism should take into consideration the region's particular characteristics. It is the spirit of the (European/CSCE) models rather than the models themselves that presents an alternative and in the long term a more viable and sustaining way of promoting security. Indeed, the Canadian initiative in the North Pacific Cooperative Security Dialogue took as its point of departure the recognition that Asia Pacific is different from Europe. It therefore advocated a gradual approach, with dialogues and inclusive participation rather than direct transplant of institutions as the initial focus. It deliberately "envisioned a more gradual approach to developing multilateral institutions, recognized

⁵ Job and Langdon, "Canada and the Pacific"; Evans, "The emergence of Eastern Asia."

⁶ Paul M. Evans, "The Prospects for Multilateral Security Co-operation in the Asia/Pacific Region," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 18:3 (September 1995), pp.201-217.