

Statement

Secretary of
State for
External Affairs



Déclaration

Secrétaire
d'État aux
Affaires
extérieures

90/43

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

"LEADING THROUGH DIALOGUE AND DECISION"

NOTES FOR A SPEECH GIVEN BY

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JOE CLARK,

AT THE SIX PLUS SIX MEETING

DURING THE ASEAN POST MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

JAKARTA, INDONESIA

JULY 27, 1990.

Thank you, Minister Alatas, for your words of introduction and welcome. I am pleased to again be in your country, this time for the annual ASEAN Post-Ministerial meeting. In fact this is the sixth year of my attendance at these gatherings. I believe I may be the only Foreign Minister, at least among the current dialogue partners, to have been privileged to participate in PMC meetings in all ASEAN capitals. I find that my enthusiasm for them grows with each passing year - so much so that I look forward to welcoming all my ASEAN colleagues to Jasper in Canada, for a special meeting during Canadian Thanksgiving in October.

This is an extraordinary time in world affairs. Whether in Eastern and Central Europe, or Central America, or South Africa - to name just three regions - there have been dramatic changes that would have been impossible to predict when we last met in Brunei.

We should not assume these surprises are over - nor should we assume that future surprises will be positive. Governments, in particular, have the responsibility to try to anticipate change, and shape it positively.

Asia is not Europe. It is more diverse, more dynamic, and, in terms of the potential of conflict today, more dangerous. As a nation that lives between Asia and Europe, and prizes our connection to both, Canadians are profoundly aware of the differences, but are also in a position to observe what might be common elements between the Atlantic experience and the Pacific experience. What is strikingly clear is that change in Europe has been aided by a series of institutions which allow, and encourage, consultation and cooperation - the European Community, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the OECD. In Asia Pacific, with the singular exception of ASEAN, there are no similar institutions.

No one wants to create structures just to have them. But neither should we be without them, if we need them. Canada believes that there is a growing need for more consultation and cooperation in Asia and the Pacific for arrangements which are not imported, nor contrived, but which reflect a reality, and protect a prosperity, of a part of the world which is marked both by uncommon growth and uncommon tensions.

We should look more carefully at institutional means of reducing tensions. The dangers to international peace are greater around the ASEAN region than in Europe today. That provides real motivation to reduce the likelihood of conflict and widen the range of economic and social progress.

Let me suggest that the success of our own forum has a wider application. We are already a de facto group of twelve and our consultations are of interest to many other nations. Could we not act as a body of twelve, for example, to begin a dialogue on political and security issues with some of these Governments? Potential discussants would be easy to identify, including among those who have sought full dialogue status in the past, and those whom ASEAN had in mind in crafting the ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation. The APEC process may help define economic priorities for Member nations, but some of the most serious problems facing us relate to political and security questions. We should at least consider whether there is some advantage to addressing them together.

Last year, Mr. Chairman, we spoke about the importance of not allowing Vietnam to achieve by default what it could not achieve by force of arms. We, for one, continue to expect Vietnam to do its full part in facilitating a peaceful and lasting settlement in Cambodia. But now, I believe the challenge is to ensure that the Khmer Rouge does not achieve through force of arms what the international community has sought to prevent through negotiation.

Our focus in this meeting should be to advance creative approaches to these long-standing obstacles to peace in Cambodia, and Canada looks forward to working with the leadership of ASEAN to turn a crisp new page in the history of Indochina.

Mr. Chairman, Canadians - and I believe the entire world community - will not accept a return to the killing fields. We must act to ensure that the current impasse is neither prolonged nor worsened. We need positive movement from all the parties directly and indirectly involved, and we need it now.

In regard to Indochinese refugees, we must all reaffirm our commitment to the successful implementation of the comprehensive plan of action agreed to in Geneva last year. It represents the best way to end this human tragedy with humane and effective long-term solutions.

Let me conclude with a reference to the MTN. Tough decisions require strong policy guidance. A successful MTN will require a big market access package, with all participants making important contributions. On agriculture, Canada is committed to working with our Cairns Group partners to achieve a major trade reform package. We hope to work with ASEAN Member nations to build on our global free trade proposal covering fishery and forest products as well as some high-technology items. We also want the world to consolidate the gains of the Uruguay Round and establish a World Trade Organization, once the Round is completed successfully.