

The broad objective of a world without arms is one which the Government and the people of Canada have long cherished. During the years we have sought to devise means of arriving at that objective by contributing to a number of outline plans for comprehensive disarmament, as well as to plans for an initial stage. All of these plans have foundered, not on differences over objectives but rather on problems relating to the stages of transition from the present situation to a disarmed world. It is in this light that the various proposals put forward must be analysed in detail in due course. It would not be appropriate for such analysis to be attempted here at this stage. It is appropriate for all proposals, together with other comments and suggestions made, to be considered in detail in the ten-power Committee which, under the terms of the resolution before us, will have all of the relevant records available to it.

It seems to my Delegation that it is useful to draw a distinction between the discussion of principles which must underlie any viable international agreement to which all states are to be parties and the process of negotiation designed to find a solid basis for agreement on specific measures. In the field of negotiation it is clear that the initiative rests with the major powers. Our satisfaction at the establishment of the ten-power Disarmament Committee is based primarily on the fact that a forum in which the major powers have agreed to pursue such negotiations has been created. In agreeing to serve on that Committee Canada was motivated by the desire to facilitate successful negotiations and will direct every effort towards that end.

At the same time the General Assembly, both in the present discussions and in subsequent discussions in its Disarmament Commission, can make a useful contribution by trying to establish the principles under which disarmament and the general regulation and reduction of armaments in accordance with the terms of Article 11 of the Charter can be carried out. The ultimate responsibility of the United Nations for disarmament is generally recognized and the Disarmament Commission should, of course, be kept in being and informed of the progress in the ten-power Committee. That Committee in turn will have the benefit of views expressed here at the present session of the General Assembly and subsequently, we hope, in the Disarmament Commission. In this way those members of the United Nations which are not members of the ten-power Committee will have an effective means of expressing their views as to how the Committee's objectives can best be carried out. As the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs said in his statement in the general debate on September 24, the middle-sized and smaller powers must have an opportunity of being heard, for disarmament is of the deepest concern to all mankind. In Canada's work on the committee we shall at all times keep these considerations very much in mind.