

I come now to the question of negotiations on limiting strategic arms which have become increasingly important as a means of enhancing the stability of the mutual balance of deterrence. The process, begun in 1969, was suspended in the aftermath of the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan. It is still indispensable that the two major nuclear powers renew their efforts to establish both quantitative and qualitative limits on their strategic nuclear forces as well as pursuing the more ambitious goal of mutual reductions in nuclear arsenals.

Some months ago the United States announced its readiness to resume talks on strategic arms early this year. It is regrettable that because of the deterioration in the international situation caused by rigours of martial law in Poland a date for the resumption has not yet been fixed. Unless the Polish situation continues to deteriorate, I do not consider that it should be the cause for an unduly long delay in resuming talks on strategic arms. The United States has indicated that it intends to emphasize reductions. Canada supports this objective and looks for a similar statement of intent from the Soviet Union.

The nuclear arms control process should include not only intercontinental nuclear weapons. It should also cover nuclear weapons stationed in Europe, starting with intermediate range land-based nuclear missiles -- that is, with missiles based in the Soviet Union that can reach Western Europe, and missiles based in Western Europe that can reach the Soviet Union. Canada is a strong supporter of the bilateral USA/USSR talks on intermediate range nuclear forces which were proposed by NATO nations in December 1979 and which began in Geneva last November.

Canada has also sought to discourage the spread of nuclear weapons to countries that do not have them. Such a development would have profoundly destabilizing effects on international security. Although we have long had the capability to do so, we have chosen not to develop nuclear weapons of our own. We have chosen also to seek roles for our own forces within the collective defence context which are not nuclear. We shall no longer require or have access to any nuclear weapons for use by the Canadian Forces as soon as the CF-101 interceptor is replaced with the CF-18A. Canada has striven to strengthen the international non-proliferation system. We have done so even though our insistence on adequate safeguards and undertakings as a condition for the export of Canadian nuclear and special material, equipment, facilities and technology has entailed commercial disadvantages for us.

At this point I want to make it clear that our support for the maintenance of forces sufficient to deter aggression and defend the NATO area is entirely consistent with our commitment