

Prelude to Consultative Group Meetings

The United Nations has been at the forefront in highlighting the Disarmament/Development relationship and, in 1981, produced a major study on the subject.

The report of the Group of Governmental Experts on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development (U.N. Document number A/36/356, Studies Series 5, New York, 1982) concluded:

"...the world can either continue to pursue the arms race with characteristic vigour or move consciously and with deliberate speed toward a more stable and balanced social and economic development within a more sustained international economic and political order. It cannot do both. It must be acknowledged that the arms race and development are in a competitive relationship particularly in terms of resources, but also in the vital dimension of attitudes and perceptions."

This study, which has come to be known as the "Thorssen Report" (after the Group's chairperson, Inga Thorssen,) has acted as a catalyst in world thinking on the Disarmament/Development relationship.

The United Nations, through a consensus resolution, has called a global conference* on this subject. The agenda includes these items:

- the consideration of the Relationship between Disarmament and Development in all its aspects and dimensions;
- the consideration of the implications of the level and magnitude of military spending for developing countries, developed countries, nuclear weapons and non-nuclear weapon states; and
- the consideration of the ways and means of releasing resources, through disarmament measures, for development purposes.

In each of the 13 cities across the country, Ambassador Roche chaired a regional meeting of the Consultative Group on Disarmament and Arms Control Affairs which had as its focus, an examination of the Disarmament/Development relationship.

* On May 13, the Government of France advised the Government of Canada that it would be seeking a postponement of the Conference until 1987.