

## Introduction: Speakers and Topics

The priorities of the Group of 78 from its beginnings in 1981 have been the removal of the nuclear threat, the peaceful settlement of disputes, and a more equitable economic order in the world. The Group's founding policy statement said: "These objectives require a new emphasis in our foreign policy based on the recognition that national security depends on an international effort to maintain an equitable and stable international order."

This year's theme for the annual policy conference, *Canada's Commitment to World Peace*, took us back to the requisites for a peaceful world – for "an equitable and stable international order" – and examined them in the light of today's challenges.

### Principal speakers

The keynote speech for the conference, "Creating a culture of peace," was delivered by **Dr. Mary-Wynne Ashford**, a physician and educator who is co-president of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War. Dr. Ashford was a family doctor and a hospice physician for 11 years before returning to university – Simon Fraser University, Vancouver – to pursue a PhD researching violence-prevention programs. Making her home in Victoria, B.C., where she has returned to clinical medicine in the field of palliative care after five years as a university teacher, Dr. Ashford is a writer and lecturer who has spoken on disarmament issues in Europe, Russia, Japan, India, Pakistan, Australia, the United States, and Canada.

To consider the politics of a culture of peace, the G78 turned to a long-time member, **Senator Douglas Roche**, author, parliamentarian, and diplomat. Doug Roche began his career in journalism and became the founding editor of the *Western Catholic Reporter* (1965-72). From 1972 until his retirement in 1984, he was a Progressive Conservative MP from an Edmonton riding, specializing in international development and disarmament. In 1984 he was appointed Canada's ambassador for disarmament and held the post until 1989, when he was appointed visiting professor at the University of Alberta, where he teaches "War or Peace in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century". He was appointed to the Senate in 1998. He is a prolific author of books and articles on development and disarmament.

This year's G78 policy conference included a special joint event with Physicians for Global Survival (PGS): a presentation dinner at which **Rear Admiral Eugene Carroll, jr.** (USN, Ret.), vice-president of the Centre for Defence Information in Washington, D.C., received the Tom Perry Peace Achievement Award of the PGS. He addressed the gathering on "Cooperation or Confrontation?". A naval aviator, Admiral Carroll rose to command an amphibious assault ship and later an aircraft carrier, USS Midway, during the Vietnam War. He served as commander of the carrier striking force of the U.S. Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean and held senior administrative and planning posts. He writes and speaks on the need for rational military programs.