

Although the talks have been under way for 12 years, progress has been slight. There has been disagreement between the two sides on the very fundamental and crucial issues of data and verification. The two sides have been unable to agree on the number of Eastern troops in the so-called "reductions area," thereby making it impossible to determine the reductions required to reach parity.

Without agreement on these very basic issues, particularly the question of data, it has been difficult to make any significant forward movement. However, the talks in themselves constitute an important "confidence-building measure" by providing a unique forum for dialogue on a fundamental issue in East-West relations.

The Non-Proliferation Treaty

As we have seen, Canada does have a vital role to play in the multilateral disarmament forums. Another prominent area where Canada is heavily involved deals with the Non-Proliferation Treaty. With 128 signatories, the NPT enjoys the widest international support of any arms control treaty. Here indeed is something in the disarmament field for which we can be grateful. The NPT provides a legal framework for the political commitment to horizontal and vertical non-proliferation which underpins the international non-proliferation regime.

It is with a solid reputation as a country historically involved and committed to non-proliferation, as well as one on the leading edge in developing the peaceful uses of nuclear technology, that Canada approaches the Third Review Conference which will be held in Geneva in August 1985. Canada is a country which deeply respects and values the NPT as an invaluable international treaty embodying the objectives of Canada's arms control, non-proliferation and peaceful-uses policies.

The importance of the Non-Proliferation Treaty as an essential instrument of international security cannot be over-emphasized. It is a vital security lynchpin which benefits all countries by reducing the risk of nuclear proliferation.