



Statements and Speeches

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DISARMAMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

A Speech by the Honourable Mark MacGuigan, Secretary of State for External Affairs, to Parliamentarians for World Order, New York, September 23, 1980

Those of you who follow closely the affairs of the United Nations know that, for almost a decade, increasing attention has been directed to the search for mechanisms to narrow the economic gap between developed and developing countries — the so-called North-South dialogue. Inevitably, this process will eventually require the diversion of a significant proportion of the world's resources to those nations most in need of economic development. Today, it is generally conceded that this task is of paramount importance. Indeed, there are those who argue that it is more than simply desirable; they feel it is vital if the international economic order is not to fall into stagnation and chaos.

Efforts to achieve a more just economic order must consist of a number of initiatives, many of which have been discussed intensively for some time. In general, they are most aptly and comprehensively considered in the report of the Brandt Commission. Today, I wish to discuss one of those initiatives — one which is rooted in the relationship between development and disarmament.

Development and disarmament have been linked, particularly by the developing nations, for obvious reasons — reasons which the Brandt Report elaborated at some length. I quote in part:

"The armaments of the superpowers and their alliances represent a precarious kind of balance which, given present political conditions, contributes to preserving world peace. At the same time, they represent a continuing threat of nuclear annihilation and a huge waste of resources which should be deployed for peaceful development. The build-up of arms in large parts of the Third World itself causes growing instability and undermines development. A new understanding of defence and security policies is indispensable. Public opinion must be better informed — of the burden and waste of the arms race, of the damage it does to our economies, and of the greater importance of other measures which it deprives of resources. More arms do not make mankind safer, only poorer."

To put the argument another way: if even a small fraction of the more than \$500 billion spent annually on military purposes were to be added to the \$20 billion now spent on aid, the possibility of making much faster progress on solving development problems would be greatly enhanced.

We must keep in mind, however, that if we speak of development and disarmament only in relation to each other we ignore a number of important and even overriding factors. For example, our analysis will be incomplete — perhaps worthless — if we consider disarmament without taking account of the concept of security, of which
