

Preface

Canada supports the establishment of nuclear weapon free zones (NWFZs) on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned, particularly in regions afflicted with conflicts, which enhance regional and global peace and security and contribute to the ultimate objective of achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. We also encourage adherence by the nuclear weapon States to NWFZ arrangements.

The indefinite extension of, and near-universal adherence to, the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) reinforce NWFZs as complementary non-proliferation mechanisms. Canada welcomes and encourages progress to develop and implement NWFZ agreements consistent with the Charter of the United Nations, international law and internationally agreed criteria. At the first Preparatory Committee meeting of the NPT Review process in April 1997, Canada reiterated its view of the importance of NWFZs.

Canada supports the countries of Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the South Pacific in concluding various treaties to establish NWFZs, as well as welcomes the decision of the nuclear-weapon States which signed the relevant protocols. We also welcome the consensus in the United Nations General Assembly on an annual resolution urging the "Establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone in the region of the Middle East", as well as the progress made in Southeast Asia as represented in the Bangkok Treaty. We believe these agreements make a positive contribution to the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. We take particular pleasure, in this thirtieth anniversary year of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, in recognizing the foresight of the architects of that Treaty.

The following report has been prepared as background for the discussions on the subject of NWFZs at the 1997 session of United Nations Disarmament Commission. It is being made available to assist officials and researchers in their work on this subject, as part of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade's policy to share the results of independent research undertaken by the Verification Research Program.

The views presented in this report do not necessarily reflect those of the Government of Canada or of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

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