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Minister urges vigorous efforts to curb the spread of nuclear arms

Grave strains will be placed on international stability and the risk of nuclear conflict will become greater unless more vigorous efforts are made to check the proliferation of nuclear weapons, Secretary of State for External Affairs Allan J. MacEachen told the Conference to Review the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in Geneva on May 7.

The Non-Proliferation Treaty, which came into force in 1970, has been ratified by over 90 countries.

Mr. MacEachen, who reaffirmed Canada's strong support for the Treaty — the best available barrier to an increase in the number of nuclear-weapon states — and called on more states to ratify it. He declared that "the Treaty clearly serves the interests of those very many countries like Canada which wish to avoid the moral burden, the dangers, the fears and the dissipation of creative energy and physical resources that would be entailed if they had to resort to nuclear arms in a world of many nuclear armed states".

Although the aim of the Treaty is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons to countries which do not already possess them, the Minister stressed that one of the Treaty's basic premises was the need for the nuclear-weapon powers to halt the nuclear arms race. The Strategic Arms Limitation Talks between the United States and the Soviet Union had promoted a climate of strategic stability and political *détente* between the superpowers. "But that is not enough," he said. "The talks have not halted the momentum of the nuclear arms race or achieved steps of actual nuclear disarmament."

Ban all nuclear tests

Mr. MacEachen called for a comprehensive ban on all nuclear testing at the earliest possible date. "Perhaps the achievement of no other measure," he said, "would so help to support the non-proliferation objective."

The Minister emphasized the need for international co-operation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy, particularly between advanced and developing

countries. This, he said, was another premise of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

"An exporter of nuclear materials and technology such as Canada is anxious to promote international commerce and co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy," he said, "but only with assurance that such co-operation will be compatible with international security."

Canada's conditions of assistance Mr. MacEachen announced that future Canadian bilateral official development-assistance commitments for the financing of nuclear projects would be undertaken solely to countries which are party to the NPT and that ratification of the Treaty would be "an important factor" in reaching decisions on the provision of Canadian Government financing in the nuclear field. He also announced that Canada would increase its nuclear technical assistance to developing countries which are party to the NPT both bilaterally and through appropriate multilateral channels such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The Minister declared, however, that "whether or not Canada extends financial assistance in the nuclear field, Canada will provide nuclear material, equipment and technology to other countries only on the basis of binding commitments that Canadian supplies will not serve the development of any nuclear explosive device for whatever purpose. This policy will apply equally to all countries. Canada is determined that its nuclear assistance must not contribute to the manufacture of explosive devices".

Safeguards system

The Minister stressed the importance of promoting a stronger international safeguards system. The IAEA verification of safeguards commitments of the non-nuclear weapon states parties to the Treaty was perhaps the most successful aspect of the Treaty.

"As more and more non-nuclear weapon states parties to the Treaty develop nuclear-energy capacities," said