

verification." The Resolution was called "a historic breakthrough," since previous resolutions on this issue had failed to proceed beyond the negotiating stage.<sup>1</sup>

Carrying out the requirements of this Resolution, in April 1986, the Canadian Government submitted to the Secretary-General, and subsequently published, *A Comprehensive Study on Arms Control and Disarmament Verification*. This publication, in addition to describing the relevant principles, procedures and techniques used in verification, also foresees an important role for the United Nations in the application and interpretation of arms control agreements, despite the fact that bilateral negotiations between the superpowers will likely continue to be of paramount importance in this context.

In 1987 and 1988, Canada's Ambassador for Disarmament, Douglas Roche, chaired the UN Disarmament Commission's Verification Working Group. The Group completed its work in May 1988, approving a consensus document containing sixteen principles on verification. The Group also held discussions on procedures and techniques and on the role the United Nations might play in verification of arms control and disarmament agreements. This last point was the subject of a speech by Mr. Roche on 12 May 1988, in which he listed certain roles the UN could play with regard to verification:

- development of internationally recognized standards on arms control and disarmament verification;
- creation of a verification data base, especially to assist negotiators;
- provision of assistance, advice and technical expertise to regional arms control negotiators, on request;
- research into structures, procedures and techniques for verification; and
- on a responsive basis and with the consent of the parties to an arms control or disarmament negotiation or agreement, potential involvement in the formulation and execution of verification provisions of specific agreements.<sup>2</sup>

At the United Nations' Third Special Session on Disarmament in June 1988, Canada and the Netherlands submitted a paper on the role the United Nations might play in verification. The two countries proposed in particular that a UN Group of Experts conduct a thorough study of this subject, to serve as a key international document on future UN activities in this field.

#### CURRENT CANADIAN POSITION

On 3 May 1988, at the UN Disarmament Commission, Ambassador Roche made reference to recent progress in, and the importance of, verification in arms control and disarmament. He stated:

Since last year there have been major developments with respect to the issue of verification, both in a bilateral framework and a multilateral one. The

<sup>1</sup> Permanent Canadian Delegation to the United Nations, *News Release*, No. 62, 22 November 1985.

<sup>2</sup> *Intervention on the Role of the United Nations in Verification by Canadian Representative at UNDC, Verification Working Group*, United Nations, 12 May 1988.