

An increase in mutual security is the only sound basis for effective arms control and disarmament. As Prime Minister Trudeau stressed at the second UN Special Session on Disarmament, security in today's world cannot be achieved on a purely national basis. Attempts by one side to make gains at the expense of the security of the other ultimately will not work. Security is a matter of weaponry but also of perception and confidence. Action by one side which is perceived by the other to be threatening creates or widens a gulf of suspicion. Action produces reaction, and in the end neither side achieves a long-term gain. Both suffer from the effort and the political relationship is poisoned. Arms control negotiations offer an escape from this danger only if the parties accept as their fundamental objective increased mutual security rather than unilateral advantage. It follows from this that an attempt by any power to develop a policy which assumes that nuclear war can be winnable contributes to mutual insecurity.

While this may be a home truth, it is directly relevant to the current situation. The origins and evolution of the INF talks illustrate the point.

In 1977, the Soviet Union began to deploy the SS-20 missile. The North Atlantic Alliance was understandably concerned by this new threat to the territory of several European member states. Moreover the Soviet Union and the United States were at that time working towards codification of a balance in intercontinental nuclear weapons.

Thus, in December 1979, NATO members, including Canada, took what has become known as the "two-track" decision. We agreed to deploy Pershing II missiles and ground-launched cruise missiles, beginning in late 1983. Canada has since been asked to help test the cruise missile guidance system. Second, NATO proposed negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States to limit land-based intermediate-range missile systems on both sides. So began the dynamic leading to the INF talks.

Since 1979, progress has been made, but much too slowly. The Soviet Union was sharply critical of the NATO decision to deploy new intermediate-range missiles in response to the SS-20 missiles, and initially was reluctant to take part in negotiations. Subsequently, the Soviet Union agreed to preliminary discussions in the autumn of 1980. Formal negotiations began in November 1981.