



the parties to these negotiations have been persuasively demonstrated. We applaud the constructive beginning which has been made in this all-important negotiation. We recognize that the negotiation is likely to be long and arduous and that to expect quick, comprehensive solutions on the many outstanding issues would be unrealistic. We urge the two parties to continue their negotiating efforts with all the determination, skill and patience that the importance of the subject matter demands, as they have pledged to do. Canada, for its part, pledges that in the Conference on Disarmament and all other relevant international fora, we will support, facilitate and attempt to reinforce these crucial bilateral negotiations.

It is a reality of our time that the USA and USSR, by their separate and joint decisions, will determine central aspects of any international framework for preserving global security. But of course, the establishment of a stable basis for enduring international peace and security must not and cannot be a proprietary monopoly of the two superpowers. Their negotiations are of vital concern to all peoples; as Canada's Prime Minister has recently affirmed, peace and security is everybody's business. It is for every responsible government, through its national policies and by constructive participation in international fora such as the Conference on Disarmament where such issues are addressed, to make its own contribution to the collective international effort to come to grips with the complex and seemingly intractable issues involved in creating conditions for stable, enduring international peace and security. The Canadian Government reaffirms its determination to do just that.

In this forum, the seriousness of Canada's commitment to the pursuit of realizable arms control and disarmament measures is well known. Canada's long-standing approach to arms control and disarmament, sometimes criticized as idealistic, is not starry-eyed but directed to the pursuit of practical and achievable goals. We see arms control not as separate from, but intimately bound up with, the legitimate concern of all states for their national security....

I have alluded already to the Canadian Government's generally positive appreciation of the course of the negotiations thus far between the USA and the USSR. While this should be a source of encouragement to us here, it should not prompt us to slacken our efforts but rather to intensify them. It should entitle us to a heightened expectation that in this forum, where our first obligation is to seek out common ground and expand areas of agreement, we will be able to avoid political polemics, invective and recriminatory exchanges, which are out of place in any serious negotiating forum.

As in recent years, the negotiation of a verifiable, comprehensive ban on chemical weapons is a priority item on our agenda. Modest but detectable progress was made on this item during the 1985 session but there is still cause for disappointment in spite of the strenuous efforts of Ambassador Turbanski of Poland, the chairman of the Chemical Weapons Ad Hoc Committee. Known instances of recent chemical weapons use should add to our collective sense of urgency to attain the earliest possible conclusion of such a ban. We note with particular attention the affirmation by President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev in their Joint Statement of their intent to 'accelerate their efforts to conclude an effective and verifiable international convention' as well as their intention to 'initiate a dialogue on preventing the proliferation of chemical weapons.' It is our understanding that this latter initiative is not intended in any way to divert efforts from the priority need to conclude a comprehensive chemical weapons ban; so too with respect to the statement contained in the proposals most recently made by General Secretary Gorbachev raising the possibility of 'certain interim steps,' possibly involving multilateral agreement on matters relating to the non-transfer of chemical weapons. As others have pointed out, and indeed my delegation has in the past, it will be of limited utility if we get an effective bilateral convention which is not a comprehensive convention in both senses in extending to all the main issues under negotiation and comprising a genuine non-proliferation convention.

Despite the considerable progress which has been made, there remain several difficult issues to be resolved if a chemical weapons ban is to be concluded. Among these, the verification provisions of the treaty will require especially serious and dispassionate effort if agreement is to be achieved. It will be recalled that, in April 1984, almost two years ago, the Vice-President of the United States of America tabled in this forum a draft treaty text which is the most comprehensive proposal yet before us setting out in detail the kind of verification regime his Government prefers and would regard as adequate. Canada has indicated its readiness in principle to accept and apply the kinds of verification provisions contained in the US text. However, while there has been much criticism of these proposals, no delegation has thus far come forward with concrete, substantive alternative comprehensive proposals which would delineate with clarity the area of common ground and the areas of disagreement, thus providing a basis for serious negotiation with a view to arriving at verification provisions which would be acceptable to all.

The Canadian Government noted, and welcomed, the reaffirmation by the US spokesman in the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly on October 31, 1985, that 'No imbalance in inspection obligations is either desired, intended or contained in any provisions of the United States draft convention banning chemical weapons.' The Canadian Government has also noted with particular care and interest the recent statement by General Secretary Gorbachev that, with reference to declarations of the location of chemical weapons production facilities, the cessation of production, the destruction of production facilities and the destruction of chemical weapons stocks, 'All these measures would be carried out under strict control including international on-site inspections.' We are greatly encouraged by this statement. We hope that during the present session of this Conference the delegation of the USSR will be in a position to further elaborate on its precise meaning. The task of seriously negotiating effective, operable and politically acceptable verification