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As our agenda indicates, there is increasing interest in the potential role of nuclear-weapon-free zones as a means to prevent nuclear proliferation. Last year this Assembly requested the CCD to undertake a comprehensive study of the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all its aspects and to report to this session. The report of the Ad Hoc Group of Qualified Governmental Experts is now before us, and I should like to register here, as I did in the CCD, our appreciation to the experts for their thorough examination of a complex subject.

The report did identify a number of basic principles with which all experts agreed, but, clearly, many unresolved issues and differing opinions still remain. This, in our opinion, underlines the need to deal with each nuclear-weapon-free zone proposal on its own merits.

As many governments may not have had opportunity to consider the report thoroughly, I shall not comment on its specific contents in any detail at this time, except to note that Canada is disappointed that the experts were not able to agree unanimously that an essential principle of any nuclear-weapon-free zone should be an effective prohibition of the development, acquisition or possession, for whatever purpose, of any nuclear-explosive device by countries of such a zone.

We have before us several proposals for the creation of specific nuclear-weapon-free zones. Canada is strongly sympathetic in principle to the desire of their proponents to explore the possibility of establishing such zones. But in the final analysis our position on each nuclear-weapon-free-zone arrangement will be determined on a case-by-case basis and will substantially depend on evidence that each proposal emanates from and has the endorsement of most of the countries of the area concerned, including its principal military powers, applies to a defined geographic region, prohibits the development or acquisition of nuclear explosive devices by countries of the zone, does not give military advantage to any state or group of states and contains adequate treaty assurances and means to verify that all countries abide by the commitments involved.

This Assembly has repeatedly requested the CCD to negotiate a convention to prohibit the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons. Despite the efforts of several countries in presenting working papers on this subject to the CCD, there has been no real progress in these discussions. We had hoped that the commitment of the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. in 1974 to launch a joint initiative on this subject would have produced tangible results by this time. We urge the Assembly to renew its request for negotiations within the CCD and to re-emphasize the priority that member

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