

Chapter 5

DEFENCE AND COLLECTIVE SECURITY

During the past year, cautious optimism over prospects for improved East-West dialogue presaged the resumption of bilateral arms control negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union, and increased contacts between Western countries and those of Eastern Europe. In the atmosphere of improved East-West relations, Canada continued its efforts, in conjunction with its allies, to add greater substance to the bilateral and multilateral pursuit of effective arms control measures, while moving to strengthen Canada's contribution to Western defences and to deterrence.

Arms control and disarmament

Canadian efforts continued to be directed towards enhancing the East-West political dialogue as well as pursuing practical step-by-step solutions to the range of arms control and disarmament issues that face the international community. A significant development during the year was the resumption of bilateral nuclear arms control negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union in Geneva, following the prolonged absence of the Soviet Union from the negotiating table. The United States consulted closely with its allies, including Canada, both before and after the negotiations commenced. The new government considered that this represented an important step forward towards the reduction of the danger of nuclear conflict and was particularly encouraged by the objectives agreed for the negotiations: the prevention of an arms race in space and its termination on earth, the limitation and reduction of nuclear arms, and the strengthening of strategic stability, leading ultimately to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. These have long been central themes of Canadian foreign and security policy and were reaffirmed by the government. The Secretary of State for External Affairs, in outlining this policy in the House of Commons, noted that the negotiating process would be long and arduous, given the complexity of the issues being considered, and that Canada would do what it could to encourage that process, including consulting closely with the United States and other allies on the relationship between offensive and defensive systems.

At home, the Department made a major effort to promote an informed public discussion of arms control and disarmament issues and to facilitate an interchange with the government on these questions. A new Ambassador for Disarmament was appointed in October 1984 to act as a focus for public expressions of interest in and concern for disarmament questions and to represent Canada at international arms control deliberations at the United Nations in New York. One of his first acts was to reintroduce meetings of the Consultative Group on Disarmament and Arms Control Affairs and expand its membership from 32 to 75 participants. This body, which met in November 1984, is composed of representatives of

Canadian non-governmental organizations (NGOs), peace groups, veterans organizations, the academic community and private citizens concerned about disarmament and arms control affairs. The Consultative Group members are invited to pass their views and advice to the Department through the Ambassador for Disarmament.

During the year, the Department increased financing of the Disarmament Fund from \$300 000 to \$700 000 per year. Monies from the Fund are provided to NGOs for activities designed to increase the level of knowledge of disarmament issues among Canadians and encourage a balanced discussion of them.

The Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security was formally created by an Act of Parliament in June 1984 and provided with increasing statutory allocations that will reach \$5 million annually by the 1988-89 fiscal year. The Institute, operating under a board of 15 distinguished Canadians and an Executive Director, will devote its activities to increasing knowledge and understanding of international peace and security issues from a Canadian perspective.

All these departmental initiatives were designed to raise the profile and level of discussion of arms control and disarmament issues in Canada and to ensure that a healthy public-government dialogue on relevant policies is sustained.

Abroad, an intensified series of bilateral consultations was undertaken to clarify the official positions of other states active in global arms control and disarmament activities and identify areas of common ground. During the year, such official consultations were held with the US, Soviet Union, United Kingdom, Netherlands, West Germany, Australia, German Democratic Republic, Sweden, Poland, Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary. At the ongoing negotiations taking place in Geneva (the Conference on Disarmament), Stockholm (the Conference on Confidence and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe) and Vienna (the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction Talks), Canada, with its Western allies, actively participated in the formation of common Western positions and their effective presentation to these negotiating bodies. Drawing upon the resources of the Department's Verification Research Unit, several studies on verification issues that are frequently the key to achieving arms control and disarmament agreements were prepared and circulated as part of Canada's efforts to encourage progress.

Defence and NATO

1984 marked the thirty-fifth anniversary of NATO, of which Canada was a founding member. The Canadian commitment to NATO, particularly in pursuit of the goal of shaping a more peaceful and secure world, was reaffirmed by the new government and emphasized at the thirtieth Annual Assembly of the Atlantic Treaty Association held in Canada in October.