

Indeed, one of the happy consequences of the Reagan-Gorbachev summits is to broaden the responsibility for arms control. For some time, the focus of arms control discussions was to encourage the superpowers to act. Now the superpowers are acting, and the question becomes whether other States are prepared to demonstrate themselves the leadership we have asked of the United States and the Soviet Union. It is no longer enough to advocate action by others. Whether the issue is chemical weapons or adherence to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, or fidelity to the recommendations of the General Assembly, the new climate involves new obligations for all of us.

Ultimately, neither arms control nor disarmament can succeed without a general will to make them succeed. The issue is fundamentally political, and this Special Session is one assembly in which political will can be cultivated and demonstrated. Increasing trust, good relations and arms reductions go together: they are mutually reinforcing.

It is not enough that the established framework of international institutions and laws must remain in place; they must as well be respected in practice by Members of the United Nations.

The strength of this institution is not the responsibility of any one group of nations; it is the responsibility of all of its members. We must all work in support of the UN and not undermine it. We cannot ask it to do the impossible. We have to set realistic goals, and we have to give it the means to achieve these goals.

In that context, the frequent calls we have heard at this Special Session for a new Fund to transfer the resources saved from disarmament to development is an example of a failure to learn from past experiences. Last year the Disarmament and Development Conference issued a final document stressing the multi-dimensional nature of security. The participants rejected both a direct linkage between disarmament and development and the creation of a fund. Nations like Canada already have mechanisms for providing funds to development, as does the United Nations itself, and in many developing countries there are ample existing claims upon any resources made available through disarmament.

Just as arms control and enhanced security are not a monopoly of the superpowers, neither is disarmament limited to nuclear arms alone. The terrible consequences of military actions in the decades since the Second World War have been caused by conventional, and latterly chemical weapons. We must face this issue squarely.