

other means would be as effective in limiting the further development of nuclear weapons.

The second Canadian initiative has been a call for the prohibition of the production of fissionable materials for nuclear weapons and other explosive devices. This resolution has been consistently gaining support in the international community. The resolution requests the Conference on Disarmament to pursue the question of an adequately verified cessation and prohibition of the production of fissionable material.

A ban on the production of fissionable material would prevent the development and production of nuclear weapons. A Comprehensive Test Ban would prevent nuclear testing of any sort. They would thus constitute significant contributions to stopping the nuclear arms race.

## CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

The Conference on Disarmament (CD) in Geneva is the sole global multilateral negotiating body dedicated exclusively to arms control and disarmament issues. Its membership stands at 40 and includes all five nuclear powers plus representation from all geo-political blocs: the East, the West and the Neutral-Non-Aligned.

Since 1980, the CD has been working on negotiating a convention which would ban the development, production, stockpiling, transfer and use of chemical weapons (CW). The terrible history of chemical weapon use in the First World War – which resulted in more than 900,000 deaths and one million casualties – and recent evidence of chemical weapons use in the Iran-Iraq war, and allegations of use in Afghanistan and Southeast Asia have reinforced the immediate need for a CW Convention.

While all CD participants recognize the urgency of concluding a treaty, there continue to be many outstanding problems and differences of opinion on such fundamental issues as the destruction of existing stockpiles of chemical weapons, the destruction of production facilities and verification provisions which have slowed considerably the negotiation of a CW convention.

Under the Canadian chairmanship of the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on CW in 1983, significant progress was made toward identifying and isolating those issues that could be agreed upon and that might form the basis for a CW convention. In April 1984 the United States tabled a draft text for a treaty banning chemical weapons. Canada welcomed this step. Since that time work has continued, but progress has been slow and there remain several difficult issues to be resolved.

Canada is also working to overcome the significant political and technical obstacles to a CTB, not least of which involves the verification of an eventual treaty. In this regard, Canada has lent its expertise to the Seismic Experts Group at the CD in an attempt to overcome some of the difficulties of verifying a CTB. Last year, for example, we participated in a 40-nation International Seismic Data Exchange (ISDE) designed to determine the scope and capability for seismic verification of a CTB. Canada provided 15 percent of the data collected during the

exercise. This is the sort of steady background work that will form the foundation for the eventual negotiation of a CTB.

It has long been Canadian policy to prevent the spread of weapons to outer space and Canada has been an active supporter of all initiatives to discuss this issue, both in the multilateral UN context and bilaterally between the superpowers. We therefore welcomed the modest but significant progress made this spring in the CD.

After some years of discussion and dispute, the member-nations of the CD were able to agree on a mandate for an *Ad Hoc* Committee on Outer Space. The work in the CD will complement the ongoing bilateral negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union. As well, there is the hope that these bilateral negotiations will augment and reinforce the work of the Conference on Disarmament. The establishment of a mandate is indeed an important first step in beginning work on the negotiation of a treaty preventing the spread of weapons to outer space.

Canada has undertaken some basic research projects to facilitate the discussions which might lead to the negotiation of a treaty. These include a survey of existing treaties and international law relevant to arms control in outer space, funded by External Affairs and undertaken with the assistance of the Institute and Centre of Air and Space Law at McGill University; a compendium of statements made in the CD on Outer Space; and a technical feasibility study on space-to-space surveillance conducted by Spar Aerospace, again under contract from the Department of External Affairs.

## THE UNITED NATIONS DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

The present United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) was established at the UN's Special Session on Disarmament, (UNSSOD I) in 1978 as a deliberative body composed of all UN members. The UNDC, which meets annually in New York for four weeks in May, operates on the basis of consensus and makes recommendations to the General Assembly on selected items in the disarmament field which the General Assembly has referred to the UNDC for examination.

The UNDC has experienced many of the same problems that exist in other UN forums and has difficulty in dealing substantively with its agenda items. At its last session, the UNDC achieved little in substantive terms, except a reaffirmation of the goals of the Second Disarmament Decade. Even perennial agenda items, such as the reduction of military budgets and the nuclear capability of South Africa, remain untouched by progress or movement of any sort. While there was some useful discussion on the role of the United Nations in disarmament, the session was characterized by a lack of urgency.

Nevertheless, the UNDC does have an important role to play in improving and strengthening the manner in which the UN deals with disarmament issues. Canada supports the UNDC and believes

that if all member-states strive to play a more meaningful role in this process the Commission could make a real contribution to the deliberation of disarmament questions.

## THE STOCKHOLM CONFERENCE

The Stockholm Conference, or as it is formally called, the Conference on Confidence and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe, is a creation of the ongoing 35-nation Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and represents a unique approach to negotiating arms control and disarmament.

The Conference is "to undertake, in stages, new, effective and concrete actions designed to make progress in strengthening confidence and security and in achieving disarmament."

The first stage of the Conference is specifically devoted to the negotiation and adoption of a set of mutually complementary confidence-and-security-building measures (CSBMs for short) designed to reduce the risk of military confrontation in Europe. These measures represent a novel and largely undefined approach to East-West arms control and disarmament. While the mandate stipulates that the CSBMs are to be militarily significant, politically binding, adequately verifiable and applicable to the whole of Europe, the exact nature of these measures is left up to the Conference to determine.

Here the approaches of East and West are in striking contrast, the West favours a gradual building up of confidence through a series of concrete steps whereas the East prefers an initial declaration that confidence exists and its subsequent reinforcement with subordinate and limited specific measures.

## THE VIENNA TALKS

The remaining multilateral negotiating forum – the Vienna-based Mutual Balanced Force Reduction Talks (MBFR) – has a much more limited mandate and membership than the others previously described.

The Mutual Balanced Force Reduction Talks between NATO and the Warsaw Pact opened in Vienna in 1973. Recognizing that the concentration of forces in Central Europe is the largest in the world, the objectives of these talks, as their title suggests, has been mutual reduction of conventional forces in Europe to parity at 900,000. Although the talks have been underway for 12 years, progress has been, at best, modest. There has been disagreement between the two sides on the very fundamental and crucial issues of data and verification. The two sides have been unable to agree on the number of Eastern troops in the so-called "reduction area," thereby making it impossible to determine the reductions required to reach parity.