

It is nevertheless true that nuclear weapons have become central to the national security systems of the major powers, including those states which Canada describes as allies. The common and uncompromised objective of all states must be the elimination of nuclear weapons from national security systems, but it must also be acknowledged that the process of disarming can itself be destabilizing and fraught with danger. Canada is, therefore, right to support a carefully planned, multilateral process for the reduction (and eventual elimination) of nuclear weapons.

Sadly, current trends are in the opposite direction. Rather than curtailing the role of nuclear weapons in national security systems, the nuclear powers now pursue the deployment of nuclear weapons for every conceivable circumstance in the belief that, if cleverly deployed, nuclear weapons can create political and military advantages for those who possess them. Both the United States and the Soviet Union continue to develop and deploy nuclear weapons systems whose main function is not confined to threatening retaliation to nuclear attack, but is to demonstrate to the other that it has the technical capacity and the political will to actually engage in nuclear battle. In the United States, for example, nuclear war-fighting strategies have been made explicit in public documents which record American defence planning (similar Soviet documents are not available, but Soviet deployments carry the same message), and in both countries these strategies are reflected in deployments of tactical weapons, intermediate-range nuclear missiles in Europe and at sea and in new strategic systems. And most recently,