

regional groups, often do less than we do, or would like to do. Nevertheless, the degree of abuse, the expenditures on arms, societal practices which raise issues of human rights, eg. female genital mutilation, should be assessed consistently in relation to the influence which we might exert in external aid, in trade and in multilateral organizations. The government has taken a clear position about conditions in Nigeria and should follow the logic of that position in all aspects of its relations. Non-governmental organizations make an important contribution to the same objective. The example provided by the Canadian Friends of Burma in support of Aung San Suu Kyi and the democratic cause in that country was cited. In many other cases, Canadian reactions are the same and the government should use whatever leverage is available to effect change, where action seems likely to achieve that objective.

Prevention of the abuse of women and children should be a fundamental objective of policy, both domestically, and globally, particularly in relation to the conventions and principles of the United Nations system. That system will be strengthened in another area of human rights by the establishment of a permanent International Criminal Court, with a mandate to establish a rules of law relevant to the responsibility of political and military leaders for gross violations of rights in war and in the maintenance of power. In this regard, the government needs to introduce legislation, as soon as possible, permitting the extradition of convicted war criminals to the custody of the Court.

Although Canadian aid policies and the viability of the whole United Nations system, at a time of financial crisis, were not conference themes, participants could not ignore the implications for "threats to peace" of current situations in those areas. They particularly regretted the fact that Official Development Assistance is expected to be reduced by 45% in the present decade and hoped that the trend could be halted and higher levels restored. The failures of the United States in particular, but also of others, to contribute their full quotas to the United Nations budget undermine membership obligations, paralyze activities and limit the organization at a time when its services are needed throughout the world. While the possibility of independent sources of income might be explored, acceptance of membership obligations is essential. The Canadian government should give top priority to work with others to resolve the crisis. For these reasons, the Group of 78 welcomed the emphasis given to this subject by the Minister of Foreign Affairs at the U.N.

The importance of public understanding of government policies and of the international situations which present the greatest threats to peace, and the usefulness of consultations between governmental agencies and the interested and informed persons in a number of non-governmental organizations, were emphasized in the discussions of all the conference themes. The Group of 78 recommends that the role of the Ambassador for Disarmament should be strengthened and that the Consultative Group formerly contributing to such exchanges

should be reconstituted. It regrets that funding for development education has been eliminated, since that program was important in bringing about such public understanding.

The end of the Cold War has diminished the prospect of nuclear Armageddon but not that of global disorder. The Group of 78, which came together during the Cold War, had hoped that something more sanguine could be said of the present global picture. Nevertheless, as a member of long standing, Hannah Newcombe, observed, it was pointless to allow either optimism or pessimism to reduce courage and persistence in pursuit of the purposes and principles of the UN Charter. In this regard, the Group noted with sadness the recent death of Prof. David Cox of Queen's University who had applied expert, and comprehensive, knowledge, with unflagging optimism, to the objectives of securing global peace.

NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

A Resolution Approved by the Group of 78 at a Conference on "Threats to Peace", 20-22 September 1996, Cantley, Quebec

The Group of 78, responding to Foreign Affairs Minister Axworthy's invitation to Canadians to comment on the implications of the International Court of Justice's Advisory Opinion on the elimination of nuclear weapons, recommends:

— Canada endorse the I.C.J.'s call to governments not only to pursue but conclude negotiations on nuclear disarmament under strict and effective international control;

— Canada work with like-minded States at U.N.G.A. 51 to support a resolution calling upon States, including the nuclear weapon States, to begin immediate negotiations of a Nuclear Weapons Convention which would provide for nuclear disarmament in all its aspects, including threats by non-governmental agencies;

— Canada continue actively to support a systematic program of incremental steps to nuclear disarmament that will, because of the complexity of the issues and the security interests of the nuclear weapon States and threshold States, necessitate a period of time for full implementation; such steps to be taken within the framework of an unequivocal commitment from the nuclear weapon States to eliminate their nuclear weapons and to start a program now to lead to that goal.

CONSULTATION ON NORAD

A Statement made at the Group of 78 Conference on "Threats to Peace", 20-22 September 1996, Cantley, Quebec

The rewritten NORAD Agreement, signed by Canada and the U.S.A. in March of 1996, recognizes that "with the end of the Cold War, we have witnessed dramatic changes in the strategic environment which have significantly shifted the focus of North American aerospace