

ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT: THE POST-INF ENVIRONMENT

Canada and the United States approach defence and security-related issues from a shared set of concerns and understandings about the global security environment. As allies through our membership in both NATO and NORAD, in addition to sharing the same continent, the two countries have developed a tradition of cooperation and consultation on a wide range of security concerns.

Canada is regularly consulted on developments at the Nuclear and Space Talks (NST) in Geneva, and on other security-related issues through ongoing official consultations with the United States via bilateral channels and at the North Atlantic Council. Secretary of State Shultz has, for example, met with NATO leaders after each of his recent meetings with Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze. The recent NATO Heads of Government meeting in Brussels offered a similar opportunity for high level exchanges between Canadian and American senior officials. Security and arms control issues are also discussed at the quarterly meetings between the Secretary of State for External Affairs and the Secretary of State, as well as being regularly addressed in correspondence between Canadian and American leaders.

Canada has consistently held the view that the existing arms control regime should be maintained until such time as agreement is reached on an improved regime to replace it. In this connection, Canada has resisted any suggestion that the United States move toward a broader interpretation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, arguing that research under the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) program should continue within the narrow interpretation of the Treaty. Canadian concerns over any action which has potential to undermine the existing arms control regime have been conveyed on several occasions at the highest levels to the United States and the Soviet Union, both publicly and privately.

The Government of Canada has, on the other hand, strongly supported the American negotiating position at the NST in Geneva. The recent conclusion of an agreement to eliminate all American and Soviet ground-based intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) missiles globally is a historic achievement which underlines the validity of NATO's December 1979 "dual track" decision, and the determination of the United States to secure a successful outcome at the negotiating table. In the post-INF era, we are encouraged by the determination demonstrated by both superpowers at last year's Washington Summit to build upon the progress achieved in arms control and disarmament as a result of