

Mr. President, any agreement that brings together so many diverse nations will be subject to certain strains and problems of compliance. In the international community, it is difficult to legislate security -- that is what certain articles of the NPT are attempting to do. The NPT, for all its strengths and weaknesses, is still an international instrument whose credibility and applicability must be constantly monitored and nurtured. The NPT cannot be taken for granted. It is a valuable international instrument, having at once both practical and moral dimensions. The fact that countries are continuing to sign the NPT, and continuing to feel that they should sign the NPT, is a tribute to both the moral force and practical utility of the Treaty. It reflects a basic belief within the international community that proliferation is a bad thing and the absence of the NPT would have disastrous results.

The goals which I have enunciated reflect Canada's expectation and desire to have a thorough review of all of the aspects of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. It is also Canada's expectation that the final consensus document, no matter what its ultimate format will be, will reflect the thoroughness with which we have reviewed the Treaty and reaffirm its fundamental value in today's world. As in 1975, let us formally reaffirm our "strong common interest in averting the further proliferation of nuclear weapons" by strong support for the Treaty.

In reaching out to critics and non-signatories of the NPT, the Conference can make these points:

-- To those countries which remain critics of the NPT, and argue that the Treaty is discriminatory, we point out that the same discrimination exists in the United Nations Security Council;

-- To those nations that call for an end to the nuclear arms race while refusing themselves to sign the NPT, we suggest that their appeal would be more credible were they a Party to the Treaty;

-- To those states which retain the nuclear option for perceived regional considerations, we ask them to consider the tragic and devastating consequences of a regional nuclear war;

-- Finally, to those nuclear weapon states which insist on remaining outside the Treaty, we strongly suggest that they follow the example already set by the United States, United Kingdom and the Soviet Union and to note that the security and sovereignty of these nations has in no way been compromised -- on the contrary, it has been enhanced.