
The major powers have the paramount contribution to make in disarmament and arms limitation. At the same time, we must ensure that multilateral negotiations, under UN auspices, serve to reinforce the arms control and disarmament process. Machinery already exists for this purpose, but it has to work more effectively. The Committee on Disarmament, for example, has shown mixed results over the past year.

I regret that a working group on arms control and outer space was not established this year by the Committee on Disarmament. Prime Minister Trudeau warned at the UN Second Special Session on Disarmament that "we cannot wait much longer if we are to be successful in foreclosing the prospect of space wars". This issue is urgent if we are to succeed in keeping outer space off limits to weapons of war. I commend the Group of 21 for their recognition of this urgency. Having tabled a substantive working paper on this subject in 1982, Canada has continued its research program on both the legal and technical aspects. We urge the establishment of a working group early in the 1984 session. We are prepared to co-operate fully in the detailed examination of the issues.

The Committee on Disarmament did make significant progress in the area of chemical weapons. Thanks to the co-operation extended to the Canadian chairman of the Committee's Chemical Weapons Working Group, we now have, for the first time, a complete document, approved by consensus, which outlines the elements of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons, and on their destruction. The Working Group has been tasked to undertake, immediately at the outset of 1984, intensive negotiations on the text of a convention. Canada's concern with the need to eliminate chemical warfare is long-standing. It goes back to the First World War, when Canadian forces were subjected to the first massive gas attack. Since then, technological developments have made chemical weapons, as events in Southeast Asia in recent years have unfortunately demonstrated, even more pernicious. It would be a real achievement if a draft convention on chemical weapons could be agreed upon by the end of 1984.

We recognize the absolute necessity of verification if we are going to make real progress in international disarmament and arms control negotiations. Since the Second World War, Canada has attached special importance to the development of international verification mechanisms and has assigned a high priority to research in this area. We have been making available increased funding for research which will help in the technical and practical aspects of verification. We hope that by sharing the results of our work through the Committee on Disarmament, we shall make a real contribution to the Committee's effectiveness.

Economic Co-operation

Multilateral institutions face the same challenges in the economic as in the political sphere. We have started to meet the challenge. International co-operation has been strengthened through the most intensive round of high-level economic consultations in several years. The series of meetings beginning with the IMF and IBRD [International Monetary Fund and International Bank for Reconstruction and Development] meeting in Toronto in September last year, moving on to the first GATT [General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade] ministerial meeting in ten years, and then to the New Delhi Non-Aligned and Williamsburg Summits, and to UNCTAD VI [United Nations Conference on Trade and Development], have been exhausting but worthwhile.
