

Session on Disarmament in 1982 (UNSSOD II). In 1980 an Ad Hoc Working Group of the CD on the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament was established, but no substantive progress was achieved. In 1981, under the chairmanship of Ambassador Alfonso Garcia Robles of Mexico, some progress was made. Canada, like all other members of the CD, was represented in the Working Group but, unlike some of the other countries, submitted no working papers on this topic. A preliminary examination of the content of the CPD was completed, based on an outline that included chapters on objectives, principles, priorities, measures and stages of implementation, and machinery and procedures. In 1982, the Ad Hoc Working Group convened earlier than usual, since UNSSOD II was due to open in early June. Despite great efforts, however, the Committee on Disarmament was only able to submit an incomplete draft of the CPD to UNSSOD II.²

The CPD was meant to be one of the highlights of UNSSOD II. Much work was done during the Special Session on formulating a comprehensive draft. However, the problems that had polarized previous discussion on the CPD remained unsolved. These included the question of how legally binding such a programme can and should be, whether specific stages should be designated, and what constitute realistic and unrealistic expectations. An especially controversial problem was the matter of time frames, and whether the imposition of these would help or hinder the disarmament process.³ Inability to reach agreement on these issues resulted in an unfinished draft (with bracketted passages denoting areas of contention) that could only be included in an annex to the Concluding Document.

Canada expressed "disappointment" over the result, but did see merit in continuing the effort. "The process of seeking a CPD has a value of its own provided the negotiations are undertaken with openness and realism."⁴

² Homer A. Jack "Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament", Disarm-or Die, The Second UN Special Session on Disarmament, World Conference on Religion and Peace, New York, 1983, pp. 60-61.

³ Ibid., pp. 65-67.

⁴ Ibid., p. 71.