

prehensive program for disarmament. Without consensus, the voice of the international community is blurred and indistinct, and the United Nations seems helpless before the onward march of events.

Consider the nature of the United Nations. It is composed of 159 countries, ranging in size from states with a population of less than my home city of Edmonton to those over one billion. Yet each in the General Assembly has one vote. Canada belongs to the "lucky few" that possess both wealth and democratic institutions. However, we well realize that without the co-operation and collaboration of Third World states, which belong to the great majority, little can be accomplished.

For many Third World countries, the mundane imperatives of survival – food for their populations, relief from debt, resources for development – take priority over what many of them see as abstract Western preoccupations on arms control.

A further complication is the role played by the Eastern European countries who, for deeply-rooted ideological reasons often underestimated, are inclined more to conflict than to collaboration with the West. In these circumstances, the wonder of the United Nations is that a common voice is found at all.

The actual process of resolution-making is exceedingly complex, and the quantity of resolutions under consideration – 72 in the First Committee and well over 200 in the whole General Assembly this fall – makes the process even more complex. Often the resolutions compete and conflict, and compromise is not always possible.

The General Assembly is a forum for debate, and resolutions are the instruments of that debate. Competition and co-operation are always in delicate balance. The Canadian objective is to synthesize, to bring together. In short, the Canadian objective is to seek consensus. Consensus is not sought at the UN for its own sake, but because only through consensus is it possible for the international community to express a common desire to achieve a common goal.

I want to focus on three areas where the United Nations succeeded this fall (in all three areas, Canada played a leading role):

(1) *Outer space*: The Canadian role in outer space matters is longstanding. In the Sixties the Honourable Howard Green, as Secretary of State for External Affairs in the Diefenbaker government, was a chief architect in negotiating the Partial Test Ban Treaty which prohibited weapons-testing in outer space. More recently, there have been Canadian technological achievements such as the Canadarm on the space shuttle and the Anik series of communications satellites. The Department of External Affairs has undertaken to apply this expertise to the arms control aspects of outer space and, in 1984, commissioned Spar Aerospace to study the feasibility of space-to-space surveillance as a means of verification.

Canada's objective at the United Nations is to encourage talks aimed at limiting outer space as an area for military competition and prevent the weaponization of space. We believe that the common, collective voice of the international community would assist in this endeavour and that such talks should take place at the Conference on Disarmament (CD), the multilateral negotiating forum in Geneva, where Canada is one of the 40 participating nations.