

As the Secretary-General of the U.N. has stated:

"It is of direct importance to the future of humanity to end all nuclear explosions. No other means would be as effective in limiting the further development of nuclear weapons."

The second Canadian initiative has been a call for the prohibition of the production of fissionable materials for nuclear weapons and other explosive devices. This resolution has been consistently gaining support in the international community. The resolution requests the Conference on Disarmament to pursue the question of an adequately verified cessation and prohibition of the production of fissionable material.

A ban on the production of fissionable material would prevent the development and production of nuclear weapons. A Comprehensive Test Ban would prevent nuclear testing of any sort. They would thus constitute significant contributions to stopping the nuclear arms race. Canada is pursuing vigorously both of these U.N. agenda items with the long-term goal of halting and reversing the nuclear arms race.

Conference on Disarmament

There are also several other important and significant issues that those interested in disarmament should follow closely. Here I am speaking about the work going on in the Conference on Disarmament on a Comprehensive Test Ban, and on the questions of chemical weapons and outer space.

The Conference on Disarmament (CD) in Geneva is the sole global multilateral negotiating body dedicated to arms control and disarmament issues. Its membership stands at 40 and includes all five nuclear powers plus representation from all geo-political blocs: The East, the West and the Neutral-Non-Aligned.

Since 1980, the CD has been working on negotiating a convention which would ban the development, production, stockpiling, transfer and use of chemical weapons. The terrible history of chemical weapons use in the First World War -- which resulted in more than 900,000 deaths and one million casualties -- and recent evidence of chemical weapons use in the Iran-Iraq war, and allegations of use in Afghanistan and Southeast Asia have reinforced the immediate need for a CW Convention.