

STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION TALKS (SALT)

The United States and the Soviet Union have sought an agreement to curtail the strategic nuclear-arms race and begin the process of reducing nuclear arsenals for nearly ten years. In 1972, the USA and USSR signed initial agreements on the limitation of strategic nuclear arms (SALT I). In 1974 at Vladivostok, they reached an understanding on the outlines of a further and more definitive agreement (SALT II). New proposals were put forward by the United States in 1977 and 1978, and it was announced in Washington on May 9, 1979 that agreement in principle has been reached on all outstanding substantive issues. The SALT II treaty was signed in Vienna on June 18, 1979. It must be ratified by the United States Government, on the "advice and consent" of the United States Senate, before entering into effect.

The most pressing arms control objective is agreement on the limiting of strategic nuclear weapons. It is vital to East-West relations and to world peace and security that the two superpowers have agreed to restricting the further growth and refinement of strategic nuclear arms. This will preserve and enhance the stability of the strategic balance and thereby reduce the risk of war.

Canada, both in NATO and through bilateral channels, strongly supports agreement on measures that would help to halt and eventually reverse the nuclear arms race.