

Statement by the Right Honourable Joe Clark to UNSSOD III

The following are excerpts of the address given by the Secretary of State for External Affairs to the United Nations General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament (UNSSOD III).

"...Six years ago, at the outset of the Second Special Session on Disarmament, the President of that Assembly could correctly observe that nothing had been achieved in the field of disarmament and arms control since the First Special Session.

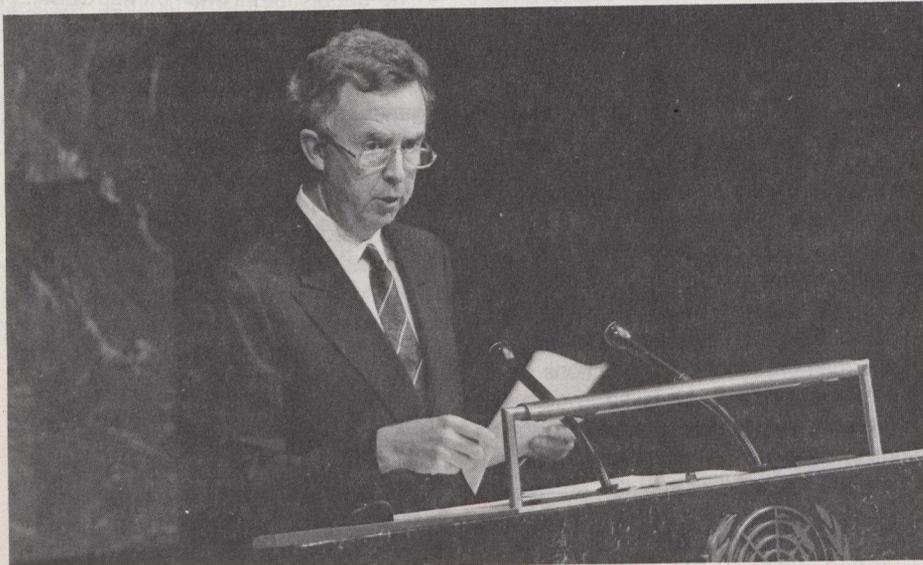
This year, we meet in circumstances which are vastly different. The past six years have recorded progress and achievements that will have major implications for arms control and disarmament. The measure of success of this Special Session will be the extent to which our deliberations sustain further the spirit so essential to continued progress and achievement in international disarmament. We must, therefore, reaffirm our dedication to the success of arms control and disarmament, and pledge ourselves to advance ideas which will keep hope and progress alive.

Our efforts here can only be aided by the outcome of the recent meeting between President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev.

That Summit clearly demonstrated the degree of progress which has been made in East-West relations. It was the fourth such meeting between the two leaders in just over two-and-half years, an unprecedented pace for discussion and negotiation.

I was struck by how many observers of the Summit referred to the new agreements signed in Moscow on verification and testing as 'minor' arms control measures. When we gathered in previous Special Sessions, the very notion of 'minor' arms control agreements would indeed have sounded strange. We have come to have high expectations of this process.

It is in the vital Soviet-American relationship that much of the progress has been made since the last Special Ses-



Secretary of State for External Affairs Joe Clark addresses UNSSOD III, June 13, 1988.

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sion. Intensive negotiations between those two states in the last several years have brought new and historic achievements, most notably in the landmark Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Agreement signed in Washington last December and the agreement in principle to reduce strategic nuclear arms by 50 percent. Those accomplishments present this Special Session with both the opportunity and the stimulus to pursue other avenues leading to greater international security and stability.

The multilateral arms control process has also had significant success in the context of East-West relations. The Stockholm Agreement, which came into effect in January 1987, has brought greater openness and predictability about military activities in Europe. Anticipated new negotiations on conventional stability covering the whole of Europe between all members of NATO and the Warsaw Pact offer us the opportunity for more progress.

There has also been some movement forward in non-East-West forums, but it has been much less spectacular. The Conference on Disarmament has made some progress on negotiations on a global convention to ban chemical weapons, but the repeated reports about the use of chemical weapons in the Gulf

War only demonstrates how far we are from an effective agreement and the urgency of our obligations. There was also progress in last year's successful Disarmament and Development Conference, the endorsement of the Non-Proliferation Treaty at the Third Review Conference of the Treaty, the inclusion of conventional disarmament on the agenda of the United Nations and the consensus report of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) on verification.

In this Special Session, it is important that we take realism as our guide and apply what we have learned from our successes, and from our failures. We have learned that arms control and disarmament cannot be viewed as ends in themselves. Both have value only if they contribute to security and well-being. Most countries accept the desirability of constraining or banning weapons systems. But, we cannot aspire to the reductions we seek, or the agreements necessary to sustain them, unless all states take advantage of opportunities to support those objectives.

Experience has shown that successful arms control and disarmament agreements share a number of essential qualities. The first and most obvious is