

Nuclear testing and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons

In the CCD and in the UN General Assembly, the testing of nuclear weapons and the danger of their proliferation continued in 1975 to occupy the attention of Canada and many other countries. In both forums Canada and most other countries continued to stress the urgent need for the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. The UN General Assembly again called on the CCD to give the highest priority to the negotiation of such a treaty. Both in the CCD and in the General Assembly, Canada emphasized that a comprehensive test-ban treaty must provide adequate means of verifying compliance by all parties and must ensure that nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes do not contribute to the testing or refinement of existing nuclear-weapon arsenals or the spread of nuclear weapons to additional states. Canada also expressed the view that agreement by some testing powers to stop their tests should not have to await participation by all nuclear-weapon states; in Canada's view the two super-powers, and as many other nuclear-weapon states as possible, should enter into an interim test-ban agreement open to all states and containing appropriate provisions to assure its effectiveness. In the CCD, Canada, Japan and Sweden tabled a working paper reporting the summary proceedings of an informal scientific conference, held in Ottawa in April, to promote Canadian-Japanese-Swedish co-operation in the detection, location and identification of underground nuclear explosions by seismological means.

The whole question of nuclear proliferation in all its aspects was examined in depth at the conference called in Geneva during May to review the operation and provisions of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Canada is a strong supporter of the NPT and its associated system of nuclear safeguards and participated actively in the review conference. In its Final Declaration, the conference reaffirmed generally the provisions and objectives of the NPT and urged the nuclear-weapon states to progress more rapidly towards a ban on all nuclear-weapon tests and towards actual nuclear disarmament. The review conference also approved a number of positive recommendations on nuclear safeguards, co-operation in the

peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the application of nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes.

On the last question, the Final Declaration strongly reaffirmed the provisions of the treaty whereby potential benefits from any peaceful applications of nuclear explosions would be made available to non-nuclear-weapon states parties to the treaty only by way of services provided by the existing nuclear-weapon states recognized under the treaty. The conference concluded that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was the appropriate international body through which potential benefits of peaceful nuclear explosions could be made available to non-nuclear-weapon states. The conference called on the IAEA to broaden its consideration of this question to include within its area of competence all aspects and implications of nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes and to begin consideration of the structure and content of the special international agreement or agreements contemplated in Article V of the NPT. It also attached considerable importance to consideration by the CCD of the arms-control implications of nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes. These conclusions were fully endorsed by Canada. At the thirtieth session of the UN General Assembly, Canada was one of the co-sponsors of a resolution on the application of nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes, which was largely based on the provisions of the NPT and the Final Declaration of the NPT review conference. (see page 60)

Chemical and biological weapons

The use of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons is prohibited by the Geneva Protocol of 1925 (ratified by Canada in 1930), but efforts have been renewed to prohibit the production and possession of such weapons. It was agreed in the CCD in 1971 that it would be simpler to negotiate a separate bacteriological (biological) weapons convention before proceeding to the more complex negotiation of a comprehensive chemical weapons convention. The latter would be more difficult for several reasons — in particular the dual (military and civil) use of some chemical agents. Consequently, a separate bacteriological (biological) weapons convention was negotiated in the CCD in 1972. It was ratified by Canada in September of that year, and entered into