

carrying nuclear weapons in the zone has been left open for signatory nations to decide independently. The Treaty has encountered problems, in that only two of the five nuclear weapons states, China and the Soviet Union, have signed the relevant Protocols. France, which maintains an active nuclear testing programme in the region, is opposed to the zone. So are the United States and the United Kingdom, which have both expressed reservations over the Treaty's symbolic importance as a precedent allegedly incongruent with their national interests.

Proposals have also been made to establish NWFZs in the Middle East, South Asia, Africa, the Indian Ocean, the Balkan states, the South Atlantic, the Nordic states, the Mediterranean, and Southeast Asia. Most of these efforts have been made in the United Nations General Assembly and the Conference on Disarmament, with interest in them varying over time. Two areas which have received considerable international attention recently, include the Arctic--stimulated by the Soviet Union's October 1987 initiative (please see the Arctic Sovereignty section of the Guide), and Southeast Asia--through the efforts of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). At their December 1987 summit meeting, ASEAN members agreed to intensify efforts for a Southeast Asia NWFZ given the example of New Zealand and improved US-USSR relations as an impetus. The US has stated its strong opposition to the concept, however.

Current Canadian Position

Canada supports the principle of nuclear weapon-free zones whenever they are considered feasible and likely to promote stability in an area. Although the creation of such a zone is not judged a satisfactory alternative to having the countries involved ratify the Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), it can make a significant contribution to preventing the