

27 March 1998

Several themes concerning Canadian policy development on nuclear weapons emerged from the seminar. One theme was enhancing the public role in the development of nuclear weapons policy by way of conferences, negotiations, for advisory groups, and public opinion consultations. As a second theme, there was strong interest in an active Canadian leadership regarding nuclear weapons. Strategic Concept review of NATO, a policy of no first use, de-alerting of nuclear weapons, clarification on the International Court of Justice (ICJ) Advisory Opinion regarding no first use, the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), nuclear-free zones, assistance to Russia, stronger international law, and flexible conditions. Third, the middle powers (Canada) should initiate a special role in promoting nuclear disarmament, the NPT, and no first use in NATO. Finally, the government should provide more information about the ICJ advisory opinion, NATO obligations, the NPT, and the role of law, including at the same time better co-ordination of information education and perspectives between D'AIT and DND.

In addition, the seminar raised issues such as the role and nature of civil society, reactions as an enforcement mechanism to promote nuclear disarmament, the relationship between the Atomic Substances and Nuclear Issues, and the discussion of foreign policy issues during federal election campaigns.

Four working groups on the NPT (Tand Rauf, Chair), NATO's Strategic Concept review (André Ouellet, Chair), de-alerting and no first use (Brian Rogner, Chair), and NATO and civil society (Mary Wynne Ashford, Chair) prepared recommendations for Canadian foreign policy in these areas.

Policy recommendations:

- Regarding the NPT, Canada should (among other recommendations):
  - support the creation of a body of international law on nuclear disarmament and strengthen existing bodies in this field;
  - encourage nuclear weapon states to talk "nuclear disarmament";
  - pursue a visible initiative on nuclear non-proliferation, based on the survey result that 82% of Canadians would support such an initiative;
  - encourage an enhanced IGO access to the NPT Review Conference in 2000 and give an NGO delegation a seat at the table.
- Regarding NATO's Strategic Concept review, Canada should:
  - convene an expert group to investigate options for discussion with the objective of presenting recommendations to the UN;
  - present Canadian territory as a nuclear weapons-free zone;
  - commission a study on no first use;