



# Statements and Speeches

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No. 75/13

## THE NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY -- AN ESSENTIAL SHIELD

A Statement by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, to the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Geneva, May 7, 1975.

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Madame President, we are here because of the world's concern about the proliferation of nuclear weapons, both the increase in those held by the existing nuclear-weapon powers and the danger that they will be acquired by additional states. Canada believes it remains vital to check these dangers, lest grave strains be placed on international stability or -- worse -- lest the risk of nuclear conflict become greater.

We believe that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons remains the best available barrier to an increase in the number of nuclear-weapon states.

We also believe adherence to the Non-Proliferation Treaty is the best means by which those who forswear the possession of nuclear weapons can develop the non-military uses of nuclear energy while providing other nations with effective reassurances concerning their peaceful intentions. We believe that the treaty can encourage the wider sharing of nuclear resources and technology by ensuring that nuclear co-operation will serve only peaceful purposes. We see the treaty as important to international *détente* and to encouraging efforts to achieve nuclear disarmament.

Canada ratified the Non-Proliferation Treaty conscious that it had discriminatory features, that it had weaknesses, and that some states might not adhere to it. Nevertheless, we have given the treaty our strong support. We have done so out of the conviction that, on balance, the treaty clearly serves the interests of those very many countries like Canada that wish to avoid the moral burden, the dangers, the fears and the dissipation of creative energy and physical resources that would be entailed if they had to resort to nuclear arms in a world of many nuclear-armed states.

Our support for the purposes of the Non-Proliferation Treaty has not diminished, but this is not to say that we are confident of its continuing strength or fully satisfied with its implementation.

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