



# Statements and Speeches

---

No. 78/7

## **DISARMAMENT: THE PROBLEM OF ORGANIZING THE WORLD COMMUNITY**

A Speech by Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau to the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Disarmament, New York, May 26, 1978.

Canada takes its place in a world discussion on disarmament as an industrial country, geographically placed between two heavily-armed super-powers, with an obvious stake in the prevention of war in a nuclear age.

We are a member of a regional defensive alliance that includes three of the five nuclear-weapon states. We are, nonetheless, a country that has renounced the production of nuclear weapons or the acquisition of such weapons under our control.

We have withdrawn from any nuclear role by Canada's Armed Forces in Europe and are now in the process of replacing with conventionally-armed aircraft the nuclear-capable planes assigned to our forces in North America. We were thus not only the first country in the world with the capacity to produce nuclear weapons that chose not to do so; we are also the first nuclear-armed country to have chosen to divest itself of nuclear weapons.

We have not, for more than a decade, permitted Canadian uranium to be used for military purposes by any country. We are a country that maintains strict controls over exports of military equipment and does not export any to areas of tension or actual conflict. We are, on the other hand, a major source of nuclear material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes.

It has been an assumption of our policy that countries like Canada can do something to slow down the arms race. But, obviously, we can do a great deal more if we act together. That is why a great responsibility rests upon this special session.

It is not the business of this session to negotiate agreements. That will be the task of others. What we are here to do is to take stock and to prescribe. High expectations are focused on our deliberations in all our countries. To do justice to these expectations we must impart a fresh momentum to the lagging process of disarmament. The time could not be more opportune for doing so.

One of the most important instruments of arms control we have been able to put in place is the Non-Proliferation Treaty. It is also one of the most fragile because any party may withdraw from it on three months' notice. The treaty reflects a delicate balance of undertakings. Many non-nuclear-weapon states regard it as an unequal treaty. It is all the more important for the nuclear-weapon states to strengthen confidence in the treaty. The best way to do so is to take early and effective steps to bring the nuclear-arms race to a halt. That is the undertaking the nuclear-weapon states assumed when they signed the treaty.

---