

idea that the possession of nuclear weapons would convey real power and influence, or contribute to the attainment of their national goals, is illusory.

We live in an age that accepts the sovereign power of nations as a primary political principle. It is, therefore, remarkable -- indeed inspiring -- that more than 90 non-nuclear-weapon states have had the courage to join together in adhering to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as an act of mutual reassurance that they will not develop or acquire nuclear weapons. I submit that, in so doing, they have not derogated from their sovereignty; rather, they have strengthened it by refusing to allow outmoded concepts to stand in the way of common sense. This has been the most significant contribution to the goal of disarmament in the past 30 years.

In May of this year, the states parties to the non-proliferation treaty carried out a month-long review of its provisions and their implementation. It was not an easy conference. The non-nuclear-weapon states expressed clearly their frustration and impatience that the performance of the nuclear powers toward fulfilling their obligations under the treaty had been so disappointing. The response of the nuclear-weapon states was not encouraging.

However, we are gratified that the Review Conference reaffirmed the vital role of the treaty as the basic instrument of the non-proliferation system and as the most appropriate framework for international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The conference made us acutely aware, however, that, if the treaty is to continue to play this role, all parties, both nuclear-weapon states and non-nuclear-weapon states, must fully meet their obligations under it.

The number of countries that have ratified the non-proliferation treaty has increased significantly in the past year, but unfortunately some 40 non-nuclear-weapon states have not yet adhered to it. The barrier against the further spread of nuclear weapons is incomplete. The nuclear programs of the advanced countries in this group will continue to be a cause of concern to their neighbours and contribute to international tensions, especially if they embark on the development of nuclear-explosive devices, no matter how peaceful their professed intent.

I have asserted that adherence to the non-proliferation treaty by non-nuclear-weapon states is not a derogation from their sovereignty but an act of enlightened self-interest. It was with this conviction that Canada and other non-nuclear-weapon states parties to the treaty undertook, in accordance with Article V of the treaty, not

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