

In 1981, the North American Aerospace Defence (NORAD) agreement was renewed and an agreement was signed with the Federal Republic of Germany to permit the training of FRG air crews in Canada.

In Canada's long-term program of replacement and renewal of defence equipment, the McDonnell Douglas CF-18 (Hornet) fighter plane was undergoing advance testing, the Aurora long-range patrol aircraft continued to come into service and the program to provide the Canadian Forces with a new patrol frigate reached the final design contract stage during the year.

Arms control and disarmament

The pursuit of verifiable arms control and disarmament agreements is a priority of Canadian foreign policy. During the year, Canada was active in NATO consultations on preparations for the USA-USSR talks on intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) which began in November. Canada also welcomed the US announcement of its readiness to resume talks on strategic arms with the emphasis on reductions.

In the Committee on Disarmament, the multilateral negotiating body in Geneva, Canada sought progress towards a comprehensive test ban and a ban on chemical weapons. The Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions talks (MBFR) continued in Vienna as did the Madrid meeting of the CSCE which tried without notable success to reach agreement for a conference on disarmament in Europe which would initially negotiate further confidence-building measures.

Canada devoted considerable time during the year to the two sessions of the preparatory committee for the 1982 second United Nations Special Session on Disarmament (UNSSOD II) and, as part of these preparations, published and gave wide distribution to a privately written booklet, UNSSOD II and Canada. The House of Commons decided that it would hold hearings early in 1982 on security and disarmament with special attention to Canada's role in UNSSOD II.

Terrorism

Violence and terrorism made almost daily headlines during 1981 and it was increasingly clear that despite world concern, as witnessed by the joint measures proposed by Canada at the Bonn Summit and the declarations at Venice and the United Nations, there can be little protection from the fanatic's bullet. Diplomats themselves are no longer inviolate or invulnerable, and several of them were kidnapped, wounded or killed in 1981.

In Iran, the US hostages were released but internal strife continued with political bombings and assassinations of the Premier, the President and other political leaders. In Bangladesh, Ziaur al Rahman was shot to death in a coup. Egypt's President Anwar Sadat died in a hail of bullets from Islamic fundamentalists. Attempts on the life of President Reagan and that of the Pope were shocking reminders of the helplessness of the rational in face of the irrational.