

Last year's session of the UNDC saw considerable progress on the items concerning Reduction of Military Budgets. Important but not insoluble questions remain concerning comparability, transparency and data exchange which are essential to successful efforts to agree on reducing military budgets. We hope that agreement can be reached on the only outstanding paragraph so that a consensus document can be reported to the General Assembly. Canada has regularly completed the standardized reporting instrument on military spending, an action which reflects the seriousness of our intent. We regret that this seriousness is not shared by more UN states, but do note that certain countries have, for the first time, submitted the required data. This standardized reporting instrument must become a universally accepted practice before real progress on this item can occur. We urge all states that have not yet done so to complete this reporting instrument and submit it to the United Nations.

We are bound, Mr. Chairman, to reflect that discussion of various aspects of this item during the recent preparatory committee for the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development suggests that we still have a long way to go.

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Mr. Chairman,

We live in a time when it is universally recognized that the subject of verification of compliance with obligations undertaken pursuant to arms limitation and disarmament agreements is particularly important. Adequate verification measures are the primary means whereby compliance with such undertaking is ascertained and demonstrated. Moreover, there is universal recognition of the central importance that verification provisions play in the negotiation, conclusion and implementation of arms control agreements. It is further acknowledged that faith in good intentions alone is not a healthy basis for concluding agreements dealing with vital national security matters; verification supplants the need for faith in the good intentions of other parties by providing an objective means of determining compliance.

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