

At the 39th General Assembly, the First Committee considered 72 resolutions ranging from Radiological Weapons to the Reduction of Military Budgets. Among the most prominent in this plethora of resolutions are those that deal with the questions of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, Chemical Weapons, Outer Space and a freeze on nuclear weapons.

Most public attention seems to have been fixed on the three U.N. resolutions which called for a comprehensive freeze on the production, testing and deployment of nuclear weapons. Expressing the fear and genuine frustration that the pace of arms control negotiations was too slow compared to continuous upward momentum of the nuclear arms race, it was argued that the superpowers should freeze at existing levels of armaments and then negotiate reductions. While the idea of a comprehensive nuclear freeze has an attractive and almost compelling logic, in the present atmosphere it seems very unlikely that it would be possible to agree to negotiate a verifiable freeze.

There are other ways of stifling the nuclear arms race -- and Canada takes the lead on two major issues. These two steps are "freezes" in their own right.

The first is the call for a Comprehensive Test Ban (CTB). Canada has been one of the "inner core" of co-sponsors of a U.N. resolution on the urgent need for a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty. The resolution reaffirms that a treaty prohibiting all nuclear-test explosions in all environments is a matter of the greatest importance. As the resolution itself states, a CTB would:

"...constitute a vital element for the success of efforts to halt and reverse the nuclear-arms race and the qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons, and to prevent the expansion of existing nuclear arsenals and the spread of nuclear weapons to additional countries."

The realization of an effective multilateral Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty is a fundamental and abiding objective of Canada's arms control and disarmament policy. Since 1945 there have been 1,522 nuclear explosions, and 53 in 1984 alone. Canada has long been an active advocate of a CTB and has been working consistently within the CD to move discussions forward. We believe that a CTB is a concrete and realistic measure that would contribute significantly to halting the nuclear arms race by prohibiting the testing of nuclear weapons.