

Arab-Israeli conflict rests with the parties involved in the direct bilateral negotiations. The multilateral negotiations are no substitute for these talks.

However, the multilateral negotiations may offer an opportunity for the parties to acquire a vision of the tangible benefits to be gained from an eventual overall political settlement — a more hopeful vision of the future for the Middle East. Canada, with its long-standing experience in peacekeeping and in other areas such as verification and aerial monitoring, and with its developed relations with parties throughout the region, will continue to contribute to the efforts of all participants to build such a future.

As we extend our reach to encompass regional and global security, we should also be aware of new issues on the arms control agenda. The dismantling of conventional arsenals and weapons of mass destruction requires the conversion of military production to civilian uses. That in itself is a Herculean task, but it will not be enough unless it is accompanied by the re-training and democratization of the personnel and military forces created to bear those weapons.

In company with other countries, Canada has begun to lend its technology and know-how to the task of conversion. We are also playing a leading role in the establishment of an International Centre for Science and Technology in Kiev to employ nuclear scientists and engineers in civilian endeavours. But it will require a massive and concerted effort to achieve progress. It would be an irony, indeed, if the very success of arms control created a vast pool of human and technological resources which, unemployed and idle, became the catalyst for future conflict.

Since 1989, the General Assembly and the Disarmament Commission (UNDC) have been placing increasing emphasis both on regional approaches to disarmament and on new and emerging issues on the post-Cold War agenda. Through its three regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament and its program of conferences, such as the one co-hosted with the Shanghai Institute of International Affairs in August of this year, the Office of Disarmament Affairs (ODA) has been actively promoting regional dialogue. Discussions have been facilitated on conflict prevention, non-proliferation in both its global and regional dimensions, confidence-



Ambassador for Disarmament Peggy Mason (right) with UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali (left) at the UNGA 47 First Committee.

building and transparency, safe storage and disposal of weapons, and conversion.

In our view, the UN has an important role to play in promoting informal mechanisms for dialogue — particularly in regions or sub-regions where institutional frameworks for such discussions are not yet fully developed. Canada commends these ongoing activities of the ODA and pledges its continuing support for them.

Non-proliferation

Under-Secretary-General Petrovsky drew attention in this Committee to the concern repeatedly expressed earlier this fall in the General Assembly over the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Canada fully shares his view that “non-proliferation in all its aspects...is becoming one of the most important subjects on the disarmament agenda, including not only nuclear but all weapons of mass destruction, as well as their means of delivery and dual-purpose technology that may be transferred for non-peaceful purposes.”

As Prime Minister Mulroney emphasized in Canada’s Non-Proliferation Program of Action in May of this year, the

problem requires sustained action on all fronts, from the strengthening of global norms and their enforcement, through the broadening and deepening of supplier groups, down to the rigorous implementation of national export controls. Particularly important is the work underway in the International Atomic Energy Agency to strengthen the nuclear safeguards regime — work that deserves our fullest support, both political and financial. Simply put, the IAEA must be given the tools and the backing to get the job done.

Turning to the linchpin of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime — the NPT — Canada echoes the satisfaction expressed by many other delegations on the positive developments over the past year. These include continuing cuts in the Russian and American nuclear arsenals, several important new accessions to the Treaty, and concrete steps to consolidate the regimes of military denuclearization on the Korean peninsula, in Africa and in Latin America.

But much remains to be done as we prepare for the launching of the NPT into the 21st century. Our Prime Minister has called for even deeper cuts in the nuclear