

essential to slow, halt, and to begin to reverse, the momentum of nuclear-weapon developments. Canada considers that a ban on the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes through strengthening and making more equal the impact of the non-proliferation regime would also contribute to achieving that objective. We therefore continue to advocate this concept. As a result of past General Assembly resolutions, it is before the Committee on Disarmament.

Working groups

Mr. Chairman, we are pleased that the work of the Committee on Disarmament is strengthened this year by the presence of all nuclear powers at the negotiating table and by the establishment of working groups. These groups will provide opportunities for all member states to play a more active role. Canada is particularly pleased that a working group on a chemical weapons treaty began study of some of the main questions, including verification. We believe that verification is at the heart of any effective arms-control proposal.

There have been a number of reports and accusations concerning the use of chemical weapons, and in these circumstances we believe it important that there be objective means to verify or finally put to rest rumours that undermine confidence in agreements already reached in this field. Unless this is done, it will be all the harder to reach future agreements on the basis of mutual respect and confidence.

As for negotiations outside the Committee on Disarmament, the trilateral negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear test ban and the bilateral talks on the chemical weapons treaty are of fundamental importance. Adequate provision for verification is an essential part of the eventual conclusion of agreements in these areas. We share, for example, in the frustration over the apparent deadlock in negotiations leading to a comprehensive test ban treaty; but that is no reason for us to settle for a moratorium on nuclear testing — which, of course, makes no provision for verification, and leaves it up to the nuclear powers to begin testing, as they see fit, at the end of the period. Indeed, a moratorium is likely to delay the negotiations, and consequently any conclusion of a treaty which is, after all, our common goal.

Test ban treaty urgent

The urgency of the early realization of an effective multilateral comprehensive test ban treaty has been underlined not only by the continuing rapid pace of underground testing but also by the recent Chinese atmospheric test, China's first since 1972. Radioactive residue from the Chinese test has passed over Canada, with effects we have not yet assessed.

The Review Conference on the Bacteriological Biological Weapons Convention and the Non-Proliferation Weapons Treaty have taken place within this last year. While much useful work was accomplished and a large measure of agreement realized at the NPT Review Conference, Canada would have preferred an agreed final document. It might have focused on the Conference's reaffirmation of the validity of the measures established to prevent proliferation as provided by the treaty, but would also have renewed the commitment of the nuclear-weapon states party to the treaty to Articles IV and VI.

Mr. Chairman, there are three subjects highlighted in the Final Document of the first