

Chapter 1

Background

Since the Second World War, Canada has been a prominent participant in most of the multilateral arms control discussions of this period. Indeed, apart from the major powers, few countries can claim as long or as important an involvement in this process, as can Canada. This almost unrivalled background has provided Canada with a unique opportunity to contribute to the multilateral arms control process and has permitted Canada to acquire considerable experience in, and understanding of, this process.

Verification of compliance has constituted a central theme in disarmament and arms limitation discussions throughout the postwar period. In the Baruch Plan of 1946, for example, verification was reflected in many of the activities and responsibilities of the proposed International Atomic Development Authority, most notably with respect to its powers of inspection. Another early example of the pivotal nature of verification was the innovative "Open Skies" proposal of President Eisenhower in 1955, which was designed to prevent surprise attack and to begin a comprehensive and effective process of inspection and disarmament. The proposals made by both the USSR and the USA during the early 1960s on general and complete disarmament (GCD), including the McCloy-Zorin agreed-upon statement and

exchange of letters, recognized the need for the very extensive use of an international control organization to monitor compliance.

Later in the 1960s, as the focus of negotiations moved away from comprehensive proposals for GCD, the issue of verification remained a central concern. The debate about verifying a nuclear test ban foreshadowed this trend, receiving much attention in the late 1950s, most notably at the first meeting of seismic experts in Geneva in 1958.

The 1960s and 1970s saw tremendous strides in the development of remote sensing technologies for military intelligence and other purposes. These advances involved the use of remote sensors or, as they have come to be known, "national technical means" (NTM), to monitor events from great distances. The ability to adapt certain of these remote sensing techniques to arms control verification greatly facilitated the negotiation of significant bilateral strategic arms limitation agreements during the 1970s.

Canada and the Issue of Verification

In 1979, following a reassessment of Canada's participation in the arms control and disarmament process and a restructuring of