

President Bush last month. We also welcome the equally positive announcements by President Gorbachev in response. These bold steps build on the solid basis of START and clearly demonstrate the commitment of the United States and the Soviet Union to seriously pursue nuclear disarmament. The withdrawal of naval nuclear weapons from ships and submarines is a particularly welcome decision and a step that Canada has long advocated.

The elimination of most categories of land-based tactical nuclear weapons is another extremely positive component of these initiatives and one that will further enhance confidence and security. The reduction in alert status of bombers reflects the tremendous relaxation of tensions between the superpowers and, indeed, will further contribute to the lowering of such tensions.

Canada is also pleased to note that the United States and the Soviet Union have agreed to engage in discussions on non-nuclear defences against ballistic missiles and to explore the prospects for moving towards greater reliance on defensive systems. In this context, Canada reiterates its support for the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty.

In the area of preventing horizontal nuclear proliferation, there have been very positive developments over the last year. The Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) has been bolstered substantially in recent months by the accessions of Lithuania, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Canada wholeheartedly welcomes these states into the NPT and looks forward to the accession of other countries that have taken the decision to join, including Angola, China, France and Namibia. Canada also commends Argentina and Brazil for their cooperation, in consultation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), in developing a trilaterally-based safeguards system that has the potential to meet regional needs for reassurance while at the same time satisfying global non-proliferation concerns.

However, there remain regions of substantial nuclear proliferation concern. One of these is the Korean peninsula where the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has yet to fulfil its obligation under NPT accession to con-

clude a safeguards agreement with the IAEA. Canada looks forward to the early conclusion of such an agreement and to its early ratification and implementation.

Another area of nuclear proliferation concern is the South Asian region. Canada strongly urges all countries in the region that have not already done so to accede to the NPT without further delay. If states of the region are not prepared to accede to the NPT at this time, other measures to reduce proliferation-based tensions and to build confidence and security should be pursued as a matter of priority. The agreement between India and Pakistan committing each to refrain from attacking the other's nuclear facilities in the event of conflict provides a valuable first step upon which other initiatives could be built. The objective of such a process should be to achieve progress in confidence- and security-building that takes into account, as a matter of primary importance, the need for nuclear non-proliferation reassurance, aimed at assuaging both regional and broader international concerns...

Canada has long attached great importance to regional confidence- and security-building and continues to play an active role in this regard in the context of the CSCE. One of the urgent issues currently facing the CSCE is the resurgence of nationalist, ethnic and religious antagonisms, which threaten peace and stability and the consolidation of democracy in Europe. It is for this reason that Canada has made the enhancement of the CSCE's conflict prevention and resolution machinery a key priority. In order to respond to the diverse challenges in Europe, the CSCE must use all of the tools at its disposal, including regular political consultations and the new CSCE institutions and mechanisms.

The Conflict Prevention Centre should be permitted to realize its full potential in assisting the Council of Foreign Ministers in reducing the risk of conflict. Mediation, conciliation, fact-finding, monitoring and peacekeeping missions should all form part of the package of tools available to heads of government or foreign ministers in managing and resolving conflict. We

believe we must explore all avenues that might assist us in building a democratic and peaceful Europe.

As a strong supporter of the proposal for an Open Skies regime covering the area from Vancouver to Vladivostok, Canada particularly welcomes the decision reached on October 15 to resume negotiations in early November. Recalling the high priority which the Member States of the European Community attached to Open Skies in their statement to this Committee, we urge all participating states to successfully conclude these negotiations before the CSCE Helsinki Main Follow-Up Meeting in 1992. We believe that the transparency resulting from an Open Skies regime will serve to strengthen stability and enhance predictability, and will facilitate the arms control and disarmament process in the region covered.

Canada has also been involved in a recently-launched initiative to consider security matters at the Organization of American States. At the General Assembly of that Organization in June, two resolutions calling for a study on security-related issues were adopted by consensus. We hope that this study, which is currently underway, will lend support to international non-proliferation efforts and will consider regional arrangements tailored to the particular needs of the hemisphere that might go beyond what can be agreed globally.

The three UN Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament have consistently demonstrated the positive contribution they can make in promoting regional dialogue and confidence- and security-building measures. The Department for Disarmament Affairs (DDA) is also to be commended for its sponsorship of timely conferences on topical disarmament issues, such as the very successful conference held in Kyoto in May of this year.

Another area of DDA's work of strong interest to Canada is the establishment of a consolidated database of published materials, provided by members, on all aspects of verification and compliance, as requested in Resolution 45/62 of last year's General Assembly. During this session of the First Committee, I will submit to the DDA and provide to members of this Committee a