

For Canada, Mr. McDougall listed a set of near-term priorities, including: 1) promoting compliance with commitments to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT); 2) working with "like-minded" states (see the comments by Prof. van Staden, above) to strengthen efforts to stanch bio-weapons proliferation; 3) establishing a dialogue on outer space, with a prospect of achieving a weaponization ban; and 4) furthering efforts to reduce the levels of small arms in circulation worldwide. These were all areas in which Mr. McDougall foresaw much scope for enhanced bilateral cooperation between Canada and the Netherlands.

There were again two Dutch respondents to a Canadian presenter. The first was Prof. Paul Rusman (University of Groningen), who gave what he called an "outsider's" perspective. He began by echoing a theme set out in the Canadian presentation: the current war had indeed provided impetus to nonproliferation efforts linked to counterterrorism. But no such impetus had been witnessed in respect of arms control, upon which the US in particular took a dim view. To some degree, said Prof. Rusman, US misgivings with multilateral arms control regimes were well-founded, at least if the experience of the NPT inspection regime provided guidance: "for any bio-weapons verification regime is likely to repeat the NPT inspection regime, in which most inspection resources are spent in checking on the most unlikely proliferators (Germany and Japan), while left much more dangerous offenders off the hook."

Regarding the control of chemical weapons, here the major source of concern seemed to be the "chaotic manner in which Russia is proceeding with its mandatory ... destruction effort." Likewise in the nuclear area Russia figured as a worry, given the quantity and geographic dispersion of its sizable holdings of fissile materials. Also disquieting was the US decision to abrogate the ABM Treaty, although its doing so was not expected to jeopardize arms reduction talks between Moscow and Washington, as had once been thought. More worrisome, from the arms control perspective, had been the US decision to withhold ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), which had the added demerit of eliminating America as "the world's arms control beacon."

The second Dutch respondent was MGen (Ret) C. Homan (Clingendael), who commenced on an upbeat note by remarking that the impending enlargements of NATO and the EU should bode well for cooperative security in Europe. Similarly uplifting was the record of arms control in Europe, starting with the CFE Treaty, and continuing through the Open Skies Treaty. Gen. Homan suggested that the key to remedying the defects associated with global NACD efforts might be found by trying to learn from, and apply, the lessons of the European experience, which had been replete with positive results in the area of conventional weapons systems. Gen. Homan suggested two avenues