

To those who continue to criticise the Treaty, either from within or without, I would simply reiterate Canada's view. The NPT has weaknesses and flaws, certainly. However, it remains of fundamental importance to the international community and has, in general, served its members well.

What would happen if the non-proliferation régime implemented and protected by the NPT were to collapse? Would the world be better off? I think not. I believe strongly that the world would be much worse off without the NPT -- more uncertain, more unstable, more dangerous; it would also be less equitable in the sharing of technological resources and expertise.

The NPT is a rare international instrument, having at once both practical and moral dimensions. The fact that countries are continuing to sign the NPT, and continuing to feel that they should sign the NPT, is a tribute to both the moral force and practical utility of the Treaty. It reflects a basic belief within the international community that proliferation is a bad thing.

The Treaty has survived its first 15 years -- not untarnished and not without criticism. An honest review at the Third Review Conference, assessing how the treaty has worked so far, where it has succeeded and where it may have failed, can only serve to strengthen it.