

My delegation would like to outline its views on our agenda which, in the opinion of Canada, contains a sufficient number of items to challenge, but not to overwhelm, our intellectual and physical abilities. We look forward to hearing the co-operative and frank views of other delegations, here in plenary and in other fora. Further we look forward to working with them in achieving useful and relevant results, including the finalization of one or more items.

We are encouraged by the progress made last year on the question of the Role of the United Nations in the Field of Disarmament. The paper presented by the Chairman of the Working Group will, together with papers submitted by other delegations, provide a very useful point of departure for the session this year. It is rapidly becoming evident that this item has great portent for the functioning of the United Nations and it may well be that the results of the working group deliberations could be considered by UNSSOD III. Canada attaches particular importance to the role which the United Nations can play in promoting and encouraging meaningful arms control measures. This role can be strengthened, in our view, through realistic and much-needed reforms which should produce not only greater efficiency and effectiveness but some financial savings as well.

The continued appearance of the item dealing with the nuclear capability of South Africa reflects a legitimate and widespread international concern. Canada's consistent, firm, openly-stated opposition to the apartheid policies of the South African government is well known. South Africa's failure to reassure the international community of its peaceful nuclear intentions by full adherence to the international non-proliferation regime continues to be cause for anxiety and must be remedied.

Canada strongly supports an increased focus of international attention on the subject of conventional disarmament. This item should remain on the agenda of the UN General Assembly and be considered at the third Special Session of the General Assembly on Disarmament. UNDC discussions on this important issue are particularly relevant at this time. At least 80% of global spending on arms is directed to conventional armaments. More than 20 million people have died in conflicts fought with conventional weapons since 1945. We believe it must be borne in mind, that as progress is made in achieving nuclear arms limitations, questions concerning levels of conventional weapons will become increasingly important.