

exchanged at that time. Each proposal is then assigned to one of a number of working groups for further detailed examination and negotiation. Depending on the complexity of the proposal, a working group may decide to establish informal "contact groups," which allow representatives of the 23 countries involved in the negotiation to meet and exchange views informally. While working and contact group meetings take place among the 23, Western negotiators also meet several times a week to help coordinate their approaches to CFE.

Canada participates actively in all Western caucus meetings and in all meetings of the 23. Reflecting our expertise in verification, Canada chairs the informal contact group on that subject. The Canadian delegation in Vienna, which is dually accredited to CFE and to the CSBM Negotiations, consists of three officials from EAITC, two military advisers from the Department of National Defence and an Ambassador, who is Head of Delegation for both negotiations. ■

Last UNDC Meeting Under Old Format

The United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) will hold its annual session from May 7 to 29 at UN Headquarters in New York. The session will be a transitional one because, beginning in 1991, the UNDC will operate under a reformed format intended to improve the effectiveness of the institution.

The 1990 session will address a range of disarmament issues, all of which have been carried over from the 1989 session, with one exception. This is the item entitled "Objective Information on Military Matters," which last fall's UN General Assembly Resolution 44/116E, co-sponsored by Canada, requested be included on the UNDC's 1990 agenda. Items that have been carried over from previous sessions include nuclear disarmament, South Africa's nuclear capability, the UN's role in disarmament, naval arms, conventional arms and the Third Disarmament Decade.

The UNDC reforms coming into effect in 1991 are expected to be based on

a document entitled "Ways and Means to Enhance the Fashioning of the Disarmament Commission." This document was annexed to the 1989 UNGA resolution entitled "Report of the Disarmament Commission" (44/119C), adopted by consensus. Included in it is a recommendation that the UNDC make every effort at its 1990 session to conclude all of its agenda items, with the exception of the single new item.

Canada is a strong supporter of UNDC reform and will play an active role in trying to bring to a satisfactory conclusion as many of the items on this year's agenda as possible, so that the UNDC can begin to examine new issues at its 1991 session. Being a firm advocate of the concept of objective information on military matters, Canada expects to assume an active role in the consideration of this item. However, due to the special effort to conclude older agenda items at the 1990 session, objective information may not receive in-depth consideration at this time. ■

Canada Chairs Ad Hoc Committee on Outer Space at CD

Canada is acting as the chair of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space at the Conference on Disarmament's 1990 session. The position of chair rotates annually among a member of each of the Socialist Group, Western Group and Group of 21 (neutral and non-aligned countries). Canada is chairing as the Western Group's candidate.

The CD is the only multilateral body mandated by the UN to negotiate arms control and disarmament issues. It meets twice yearly in Geneva for spring (February-April) and summer (June-August) sessions. The decision to establish an *ad hoc* committee to deal with the issue of arms control and outer space was taken by the CD on March 29, 1985, in conformity with a consensus resolution adopted by the

UN General Assembly during its 39th session on December 12, 1984.

The mandate of the *Ad Hoc* Committee for 1990, agreed by the CD, is to "continue to examine and to identify, through substantive and general consideration, issues relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space."

In his address to the *Ad Hoc* Committee at its first meeting of the year, on March 13, Canada's Ambassador to the CD, Mr. Gerald Shannon, noted that "Canada has for many years manifested considerable interest in and has contributed significant resources to the work of this Committee. That interest has not waned despite the difficulties that we have had in agreeing on how, in concrete terms, we should prevent an arms race in outer space. The reason why it has not waned, despite such

frustrations, stems from our recognition of the long-term importance of the issues involved."

Mr. Shannon observed that in an immediate perspective, the question of prevention of an arms race in outer space is closely related to strategic stability on earth. He also stressed the longer-term importance of the question, noting that "none of us...can say with any degree of confidence or indeed omniscience what the real political, economic, cultural and intellectual ramifications of our species venturing into space will be...[However,] it is probably impossible to underestimate that importance." He called on the Committee to take a long-term and responsible view of the genuine substantive differences expressed within itself, and to adopt a positive perspective on its work. ■