

This has reflected very different approaches on how efforts should proceed towards this goal and on the appropriate timing for the implementation of a CTBT.

While progress towards a CTBT has been elusive for many years, Canada believes that recent developments offer reason for hope that the process is on track and that significant progress on reducing and ultimately banning nuclear tests is within our reach in the foreseeable future.

Step-by-step approach is most realistic means of achieving progress towards CTBT goal.

Canada has long advocated a step-by-step approach as the most realistic means of achieving meaningful progress towards the CTBT goal. In our view, such a process allows, and indeed fosters, mutual confidence among the parties, and offers concrete experience on key issues such as compliance and verification that are crucial to the implementation of an effective CTBT.

The mechanism for such a step-by-step process has been in place since 1987 when the United States and the Soviet Union agreed to initiate "full-scale, stage-by-stage" negotiations on nuclear testing. These negotiations, as a first step, have succeeded in concluding verification protocols to the Threshold Test Ban Treaty of 1974 and the Peaceful Nuclear Explosions Treaty of 1976. The protocols were signed at the Washington presidential summit in June 1990 and Canada welcomes the fact that the ratification process of these treaties has now been completed, allowing them to be brought into force.

In Canada's view, the ratification of the 1974 and 1976 treaties provides a solid base upon which negotiations on further testing restrictions can be built. In this regard, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, in his statement to the 45th session of the United Nations General Assembly last September, expressed Canada's belief that the United States and the Soviet Union should immedi-

ately follow up their commitment to negotiate further restrictions on nuclear testing with the final goal of a comprehensive ban on nuclear testing. Canada urges the two states concerned to negotiate further limitations on their respective nuclear testing programs, which could include both limits on the number and yield of tests as intermediary measures on the road to the conclusion of an effective and verifiable CTBT at an early date.

Being a crucial issue of relevance to the entire international community, it is appropriate that efforts also be made in relevant multilateral fora to advance

towards the CTBT goal. Canada was pleased that the Conference on Disarmament, after a lengthy hiatus, succeeded in establishing an ad hoc committee during its 1990 session on the subject of a nuclear test ban. This development represents a breakthrough as it opens the door to substantive consideration of issues related to a CTBT. Although time was limited, the 1990 CD session engaged in useful preliminary work on the issues at hand. Canada looks forward to the re-establishment of this ad hoc committee, with the same mandate as in 1990, at the beginning of the CD's 1991 session, with a view to carrying forward the initial work undertaken last year.

The Conference on Disarmament has also undertaken important work over a number of years in verification of a CTBT, particularly in the area of seismic verification. The Group of Scientific Experts, in which Canadian representatives have been active, has made commendable efforts in fulfilling its mandate, given by the Conference on Disarmament in 1976, to devise a conceptual design for an international seismic data exchange system. The excellent work of the Group of Scientific Experts with the support of a wide range of technical experts around the world will, we believe, play a central role in the verification regime of a CTBT.

The Partial Test Ban Treaty of 1963 marked an important achievement in

multilateral arms limitation and disarmament negotiations. This Treaty effectively ended atmospheric testing by the three nuclear-weapon signatories and set a norm — that of limiting nuclear testing to underground explosions — that is now adhered to by all five nuclear-weapon states. Furthermore, the preamble of the PTBT clearly reflected the yearning of the international community for a complete ban on nuclear testing and the nearly 120 parties to the Treaty have, in signing the Treaty, committed themselves to seeking this goal.

Those states party to the PTBT that called for the convening of this Conference have proposed that a CTBT be concluded by means of an amendment to the PTBT. Canada has consistently held the position that the conclusion of a CTBT has not yet been achieved because of fundamental differences among the international community over the appropriate process to achieve such a treaty, as well as over timing. These fundamental differences have constrained the work of the Conference on Disarmament and the bilateral negotiations on this issue and will similarly affect our consideration of a CTBT at this Conference.

However, despite the challenging nature of the task at hand, the Conference on Disarmament is now addressing this issue in a serious way. Canada believes that with the cooperation of the parties concerned, the CD, as well as the bilateral process, will succeed in overcoming the hurdles that stand in the way of concluding an effective CTBT...

Canada hopes that our collective efforts over the next week and a half will provide impetus to the Conference on Disarmament in its consideration of the nuclear test ban item. This, in our view, is the appropriate forum for multilateral work in pursuit of a CTBT. A serious and constructive approach by all delegations to this Conference can, in Canada's view, produce results that will enhance and expedite the work of the Conference on Disarmament on this issue. Canada will seek to ensure that our deliberations produce such a positive outcome. ■