

thus promote restraint in arms spending. Such dialogue could also lead to the development of regionally based registers that respond to the specific concerns and conditions of each region, e.g., Europe, the Americas, Africa and Asia Pacific.

The challenge of dealing with conventional weapons also includes the problem of landmines. Canada has a two-track approach to this challenge.

First, we are working for a global ban on anti-personnel (AP) landmines. Beginning with our January 1996 announcement of a moratorium on the production, export and operational use (except for training purposes) of AP landmines, Canada has assumed an international leadership role in the campaign to eliminate these instruments of war and suffering. Canada has been championing an international convention banning the production, transfer, stockpiling and use of AP landmines. In less than 12 months, the international community has achieved an unprecedented goal by taking the notion of a treaty to ban landmines from concept to reality. The final text of the "Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction" was officially accepted by Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy on September 26, following a final round of negotiations in Oslo. The treaty opened for signature at a conference held in Ottawa from December 2 to 4. Over 100 countries were expected to attend and sign the treaty at that time.

Secondly, we are in the process of ratifying Protocols II & IV of the international convention that regulates the use of landmines — the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. This instrument will remain an important one, particularly for those countries not yet willing to sign the Ottawa Treaty.

Canada has played a leading role in securing the indefinite extension of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty. Canada is lobbying other countries hard to persuade them to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, so that it may soon enter into force. Canada, having ratified the Chemical Weapons Convention in September 1995, has now established within DFAIT its National Authority to serve as the focal point for effective liaison with the Convention's international secretariat in The Hague.

Canada is also concerned that excessive military spending in developing countries may reduce scarce public resources available for basic human needs. However, Canada cannot be effective if it acts alone. We are, therefore, working to address this issue in multilateral institutions with like-minded countries and development partners. In March 1997, Canada co-sponsored and hosted with the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), a symposium of experts from developing and donor countries, international financial institutions and the United Nations on the subject of military expenditures in developing countries. The symposium identified some key areas for further multilateral activity on this complex issue.