

3 Concluding Remarks

3.1 Doug Roche

There are a number of paradoxes that characterize the international scene and Canada's relationship to it. While NATO is reviewing its Strategic Concept, it announces that its nuclear posture will not change until a "European security architecture" is formed and regional security exists. However, many non-nuclear weapon states believe that retaining nuclear weapons into the 21st century is itself a source of destabilization.

Canada has said that nuclear disarmament negotiations are not conditional on obtaining conventional disarmament. It has committed itself to uphold the ICJ; however, it voted against starting the negotiations which the ICJ says must begin and be concluded. Canada wants to espouse international law, yet it also wants to maintain allegiance to NATO.

The NPT and NATO seem to split the focus of Canadian foreign policy, so that DFAIT and DND are saying different things. Perhaps Canada can find a way to bring the ICJ and NATO together. A key question is whether Canada can influence NATO policy, or is itself driven by NATO policy.

Although it may not be wise to base Canadian government policy on the results of public opinion polls, government can be informed by polls. The Angus Reid poll demonstrates the commitment of Canadians to both nuclear abolition and NATO. Canada has commitments to NATO, the NPT, and the ICJ and needs to build better dialogue and partnerships among them. It is necessary to recognize how military alliances should, and could, function in the post-Cold War era.

There is a sense of urgency around de-alerting and no first use. The Ottawa Process was not achieved alone; nuclear weapon policy change cannot be done alone, either. Canada could consider using the NPT Review in 2000 to work within a new coalition of middle powers to promote de-alerting and no first use. An alliance of middle powers could contribute to changing US public opinion.

There is also a need for better information and debate in Canadian society. NGOs have a responsibility here as well. There are people in government who want to move ahead but are constrained; they need the support of NGOs. Currently there is not enough pressure from the public and NGOs. The public must be mobilised on the issue to take advantage of the window of opportunity. Again, while NGOs can help promote the issue, government assistance is necessary. By working together, it will be possible to find ways to overcome the challenges.

3.2 Steven Lee

In regard to sanctions as alternatives to military enforcement of international law, the CCFPD is about to implement a research project to examine the history of sanctions and their efficacy. Lee will share the results of the study.

Comments made regarding the Arctic will be passed on to the authors of a discussion paper on the subject.

As part of the public contribution to the discussion, a formal report of this meeting will be forwarded to the Director of Policy Planning in DFAIT, to Minister Axworthy, and to Paul Meyer and other departmental officials. It has also been recommended that a copy be sent to the Parliamentary Committee. Delegates can expect follow-up information on any resulting speeches or policy developments in about a month.