

Canada in the United Nations

September 1989

Negotiating for Peace: Canadian Support for Arms Control and Disarmament

Throughout the post-war era, the need for balanced, verifiable, multi-lateral disarmament has been a central tenet of Canadian foreign policy.

Recognizing that the achievement of significant arms control and disarmament agreements is a responsibility of the entire world community, Canada has endeavoured to make practical, realistic contributions to this process, through its effective participation in appropriate multilateral forums and its active encouragement of bilateral efforts.

Promoting Arms Reductions

Since the Second World War Canada has been a prominent and active non-nuclear weapon state in its efforts to promote the control and reduction of armaments both at the regional level and on a global basis.

As well, Canada continues to be an active member of every multilateral disarmament body. Prime Minister Brian Mulroney was therefore pleased to hail the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) Agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union as "a pragmatic step towards a better and safer world," and "a celebration of common sense over adversity."

A world leader in the development of arms control verification approaches and mechanisms, Canada has actively contributed to the efforts of the UN Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament (CD) in this area. Canada is also working with other nations in the CD in formulating an international ban on the manufacture, stockpiling, and use of chemical weapons.

Six key objectives have guided Canada's continuing efforts in promoting arms control and disarmament:

- enhancement of global stability, through the successful completion of negotiations leading to radical reductions in nuclear forces;
- maintenance and strengthening of existing international treaties concerning the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons;
- active participation in negotiations leading towards a global ban on chemical weapons;

- support for a comprehensive test ban treaty (CTBT) to bring about an end to all testing of nuclear weapons;
- promotion and encouragement of confidence-building measures to permit gradual reductions in conventional military forces in Europe and elsewhere; and
- strong, vocal support for bilateral and multilateral efforts to prevent an arms race in outer space.

Making Arms Control Work

Canada believes that verification is a key element in achieving and maintaining sound and effective arms control and disarmament agreements.

Unfortunately, faith in good intentions alone cannot serve as the basis for concluding agreements. Verification can help to generate a climate of international confidence by providing an objective means of determining ongoing compliance.

In recent years, Canada has emerged as a recognized leader in arms control verification. Since 1983, Canada has allocated \$1 million per year to research activities aimed at improving available verification methods and their practical application. Under this program, for instance, the University of Toronto launched a still ongoing project to study the use of regional seismic data in distinguishing between earthquakes and underground nuclear explosions.

Canada recently completed a \$3.5 million upgrade of an array of seismic monitors located at Yellowknife, in the Northwest Territories. This facility, which officially opened in September 1989, is expected to play an important part in the establishment of a global seismic monitoring network, which will be required to verify an eventual comprehensive test ban treaty.

Canada has emerged as a recognized leader in arms control verification. (Photo: Spar Aerospace Limited)

