

Conference participants discovered no quick fixes. Indeed, in the area of the implementation of verification accords, participants were struck by the many daunting problems surrounding the destruction of arms. Nonetheless, the Conference deepened multilateral understanding of current challenges and opportunities in the disarmament field, and of the increasingly interdependent and multidimensional nature of security.

At the close of the Conference, many of the participants joined in a tour of the Peace Memorial Park in Hiroshima, a poignant reminder of the urgent need to find enduring ways to resolve disputes peacefully.

Following the Conference, Ambassador Mason spent ten days in the Asia-Pacific region, where she engaged in disarmament consultations with officials, academics and NGO representatives. In addition to Japan, she visited New Zealand, Australia, Indonesia and South Korea.

While in Wellington, Ambassador Mason met with members of the New Zealand government's Advisory Committee on Disarmament Affairs — made up of members of the public — and, while in Canberra, she visited the Peace Research Centre at the Australian National University.

The Ambassador's consultations provided an excellent opportunity to follow up on the work of the 1991 session of the UN Disarmament Commission and to begin preparations for the 46th session of the UN General Assembly. She also discussed security issues in the Pacific region and Canada's proposal for a North Pacific Cooperative Security Dialogue.

In addition, Ambassador Mason focussed on efforts to improve the functioning of multilateral arms control and disarmament bodies and on the need to promote enhanced cooperation on disarmament issues among like-minded countries from both the developed and developing worlds.

On June 27, shortly after returning from the tour, the Ambassador gave a seminar to students and faculty at York University's Centre for International and Strategic Studies on the results of her consultations. ■

Consultative Group Looks at Arms Control and Disarmament in the 1990s

Arms control and disarmament in the 1990s was the focus of discussion when Quebec members of the Consultative Group on Disarmament and Arms Control Affairs met with Ambassador for Disarmament Peggy Mason in Montreal on March 20.

Participants heard from three speakers: Professor Harold Klepak of the Strategic Studies Department at the Royal Military College of St-Jean, who offered a North-South perspective; Ms Janine Krieber, PhD candidate at the Institute of Political Studies in Paris (residing in Washington), who presented an East-West perspective; and Professor Jules Dufour of the Social Sciences Department at the University of Quebec in Chicoutimi, who took a functionalist approach.

A North-South perspective

Professor Klepak cautioned that the optimism that is justified in the East-West arms control context is misplaced when it comes to the Third World. While the end of superpower competition will have some beneficial effects, Third World states continue to have genuine security needs to which arms are a response. He went through the range of proliferation issues likely to dominate North-South arms control and disarmament relations in the 1990s.

On nuclear weapons, Professor Klepak saw signs that augur well for progress, including Brazil's and Argentina's agreement on nuclear cooperation, South Africa's announcement that it would sign the NPT, and Pakistan's and India's declared intention to take more seriously their agreements on not attacking one another's nuclear facilities.

On missile systems, Professor Klepak expressed greater pessimism. Ballistic missiles are an extremely attractive delivery system to Third World states; the Gulf War demonstrated their political — if not military — effectiveness; and the MTCR is limited in scope and membership. On chemical weapons, Professor Klepak was similarly unhopeful. Although such weapons were not

used in the Gulf War, their prestige may have been augmented as "the world held its breath." On conventional weapons, aside from Latin America, where improved relations have led to the possibility of negotiations, he did not see strong prospects for arms control.

Professor Klepak concluded by observing that Third World states recognize recent shifts in the international power balance and are scrambling to find their place in the new world order. Security questions are high on their agenda. If the North does not assist in providing security arrangements through diplomacy, the South will not disarm. He argued in favour of the parallel pursuit of arms control and conflict resolution, on a regional basis.

An East-West perspective

Ms Krieber focused on the meaning and implications of the "new world order." She noted that President Bush's conception of a world governed by the rule of law between nations is a long-standing ideal, also held by the creators of the UN, that in practice will be hard to construct. In her view, the post-Cold-War international system is characterized by interdependence, the end of bipolarity, the splintering of blocs and — as the USA and the USSR become proportionately less dominant — increased autonomy for middle powers. It is a more complex world, also a more dangerous one. Conflicts are likely to be smaller but also more frequent and more numerous.

Ms Krieber opined that the world is moving towards a balance-of-power system, where alliances are supple — witness the Gulf Coalition — and conflicts can come from any quarter. To counter the inherent instability of such a system, she advocated the use of diplomacy, treaties and multilateral understandings to regulate activities and reduce the need for arms. She favoured the retention of Cold War institutions like NATO which could develop into political bodies capable of promoting adherence to a code of conduct among states.