

the Agreement. The acceptance of such powerful verification measures in support of greater transparency in military activities has provided us with a practical, workable recipe for building confidence on a multilateral basis.

Mr. President, verification and transparency are two subjects that have formed a central part of the Canadian Government's approach to multilateral arms control and disarmament. They are central elements in the building of confidence and consensus. It will come as no surprise, I am sure, to the distinguished representatives to this Conference that verification ranks high in our priorities. Canada has endeavoured through its Verification Research Programme to contribute in an effective way to the very foundation of modern arms control. Some of the studies we have initiated have looked at technical problems associated with various methods of verification, while others have sought to clarify the conceptual basis of verification, bearing in mind that much will depend on the type of arms control and disarmament to be verified. Ambassador Marchand's Plenary statement last March illustrated this approach through mention of the projects we have pursued in the past and those we are currently pursuing. I shall not repeat them in detail here.

I should like, however, to add several points on verification as it pertains to multilateral arms control and disarmament. In 1985, attention was initially focussed on this subject in the UN General Assembly through a Canadian initiative which led to the adoption by consensus of a Resolution (40/152 (o)) which crystallized the increasing worldwide awareness of the importance of verification in facilitating the negotiating process. Since then, this awareness has grown and become more sophisticated. For example, the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) during 1987 and 1988 developed a set of general principles of verification. We call them 'the 16 principles.' The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) 43 called for a study by the Secretary-General on the role of the UN in verification. This led to the setting up of a Group of Experts from 20 countries who

started their work in February this year. They paid me the honour of electing me Chairman; I, in turn, have pledged to the group that I shall spare no effort in guiding our work to a fruitful conclusion.

The Group's acceptance of the 16 principles as a foundation for its work was a positive development. As one might well expect, the exact nature of our recommendations cannot be determined at this early stage of our work. But progress so far has been good, and I remain optimistic that we shall produce a report that is technically competent, politically realistic and one which will strengthen the multilateral arms control process and the United Nations itself.

Allow me at this point to offer some thoughts on how multilateral verification and the quest for greater transparency and openness surrounding military activi-

Acceptance of 16 principles of verification a positive development

ties can come together to build confidence. Last month, President Bush unveiled a proposal for 'Open Skies.' It would involve, as the name suggests, opening a country's national airspace to short-notice overflights by unarmed aircraft, on the basis of reciprocity. The proposal has been laid out in bilateral terms, involving the territories of the United States and the Soviet Union. President Bush, however, clearly indicated that the proposal could easily be reworked to include member states of NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organization. At the moment, 'Open Skies' is seen as a confidence-building measure independent of any specific arms control or disarmament agreement. It seeks to improve transparency and openness in a way that is accessible to all countries. Highly sophisticated satellite technology would not be required. Nor would any information be gathered that would not be similarly available to other countries, especially in the area of most concern to all: military preparations for surprise attack and offensive action...

Over the past two years, agreement has been reached on vitally important

issues relating to verification, methods and timetables for CW destruction, and declarations in advance of a treaty. The next few steps — hammering out the details — will not by their very nature give the appearance of dramatic progress. But appearances cannot be a substitute for real, if slower and more arduous, headway in completing the draft Convention before us. The key lies in keeping the negotiations free from artificial deadlines and from the inclination to force issues ahead of what consensus can sustain. Progress over the next session will be step-by-step and will depend on appropriate attention to detail. I commend the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, Ambassador Pierre Morel, in facilitating this progress through his well-focussed and practical work programme.

Mr. President, we must not lose sight of the fact that the sixteen verification principles agreed by consensus at the UNDC constitute the cornerstone of an emerging common approach to disarmament. Accordingly, this consensus must be protected and nourished to allow its roots to sink deeply into the multilateral disarmament process. Naturally, these roots, as they develop, will become more intertwined and complex, but this is true of any firmly established system. We should not be dismayed at the prospect of complexity in verification. The question is how we can carry out practically and effectively that which has been agreed to in principle and by all member States of the Conference.

In the modern age, arms control and disarmament have become, to the surprise of some, perhaps, increasingly reliant on short-notice, on-site inspection. The feature is found in the USA/Soviet Treaty on Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces, as well as in the multilateral Stockholm accord on confidence- and security-building measures. Both agreements have been successfully implemented and fully complied with, a result, I would argue, to a large measure attributable to the possibility of such inspections.

Allow me to amplify these remarks by applying them to the draft chemical weapons convention. I find it difficult to