

investigated and reported by the Secretary-General. Canada, like many other nations, has welcomed President Reagan's call for and President Mitterrand's offer to host a conference to reverse the erosion of the 1925 Geneva Protocol banning the use of chemical weapons. What these events underline is the urgency of concluding as soon as possible a comprehensive, verifiable global ban on chemical weapons, as it is being negotiated at the Conference on Disarmament.

For many, including the Canadian Government, the progress in these negotiations must seem frustratingly slow. But in our judgment, this is not because of a lack of serious effort and intent on the part of participants in the negotiations. Rather, it reflects the genuinely difficult technical and legal issues involved, particularly in relation to various aspects of the verification provisions of the treaty under negotiation. The Canadian delegation, in close cooperation with the delegation of Poland, will work to ensure that this Committee again registers by consensus its view on the urgency of concluding the negotiations toward a global, verifiable chemical weapons ban.

The conclusion of a comprehensive ban on nuclear testing has long been, and remains, a fundamental Canadian objective. The progress being made in this area by the United States and the USSR is welcome and should be energetically pursued. With other delegations, we will again be sponsoring a draft resolution urging steps toward the earliest attainment of this objective.

The Canadian delegation will also be giving special attention to other issues which we regard as of priority concern. One of these is the prevention of an arms race in outer space. This has been under active discussion at the Conference on Disarmament since 1985. Canada has made major contributions to those discussions, which we believe have contributed usefully to clarification of the issues involved. We will continue to do so. Clearly, the negotiations between the USA and the USSR in this area are of crucial importance and should be supported. Continued strict compliance with existing relevant

treaties, including the 1972 Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems, remains critically important. Equally clearly, this is a subject area of legitimate multilateral concern, and decisions on whether additional legal measures may be required are of broad international interest.

For more than three decades, the international arms control and disarmament agenda has been dominated by issues related to nuclear weapons. This dominant concern was clearly recorded in the Final Document of the First Special Session Devoted to Disarmament. This preoccupation was not misplaced and there must be no slackening of efforts to reduce reliance on nuclear arms.

However, tens of millions have been slaughtered by the use of conventional weapons. Moreover, technological advances are resulting in quantum leaps in both the destructive capabilities of non-nuclear weapons and the costs of their development and production. It is especially tragic that countries which can ill afford the diversion of resources from pressing social and economic needs feel compelled to resort to large-scale acquisition of such weaponry. The Canadian delegation is, therefore, eager to engage with other delegations in constructive and dispassionate dialogue on how best to bring the conventional arms race, in both its quantitative and qualitative dimensions, under more effective control. At the heart of such a project is how to reduce the sense of insecurity which leads States to rely increasingly on arms as a basis for security and, equally, how to bring arms-related technological developments under more effective policy direction.

I began my statement with some brief reflections on the ambivalent nature of hope in human affairs. Hope, while subject to deception, is a necessary precondition for any kind of human achievement. Our sense of the present situation is that there is a bit more hope in the air than we have recently been accustomed to. We must build on this and we must build carefully. Peace must become embedded in our institutions and our habits. The United Nations must be the premier forum for this collective endeavour. Let us use it well." ■

Selected Recent Department of External Affairs Publications

1. News Release No. 202

"Disarmament and International Security: Douglas Roche Elected Chairman of UN Committee." September 20, 1988.

2. News Release No. 208

"USA Initiative to Strengthen International Prohibition Against Chemical Weapons Use." September 26, 1988.

3. News Release No. 214

"Clark Gives Canada's Reaction to the 1988 Peace Nobel Prize Award to United Nations Peacekeeping Forces." September 29, 1988.

4. Address by the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney, Prime Minister of Canada, before the UN General Assembly. New York, September 29, 1988.

5. "Sovereignty in an Interdependent World." Notes for Remarks by the Right Honourable Joe Clark, Secretary of State for External Affairs, at Carleton University, Ottawa, October 18, 1988.

6. News Release No. 227

Appointment to the Board of Directors of the Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security." October 21, 1988.

7. News Release No. 241 (Government of Canada)

"Publication by Member Countries of the North Atlantic Alliance of the Document 'Conventional Forces in Europe: The Facts'." November 25, 1988.

8. News Release No. 001

"Joe Clark Leads Canadian Delegation to Paris Conference on Chemical Weapons." January 3, 1989.

All the above publications are available free of charge from the Editor. ■