

NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION AND SAFEGUARDS

The year 1978 marked an important breakthrough for Canada's efforts to amend its nuclear cooperation agreements to reflect the enhanced level of safeguards which Canada announced it would require following the review of its nuclear safeguards policy in 1974. Agreements reflecting Canada's requirements were signed in 1978 with Euratom, Japan and Romania. Not only are Euratom and Japan two of Canada's largest uranium customers, but the agreements in addition to dealing with uranium provide safeguard assurances for a full range of nuclear commerce. The Agreement with Romania was signed in contemplation of a possible sale of CANDU reactors to that country.

Also on the bilateral front, negotiations began with the United States during the year toward a revised nuclear cooperation agreement which would meet Canada's safeguards requirement on a more comprehensive basis than the present interim solution and which would equally fulfill the requirements of the United States Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act.

Canada has always recognized that one nation acting alone cannot greatly improve the international level of safeguards. It was, therefore, pleased that fourteen of the world's most important nuclear supplier nations, including Canada, joined in sending similar communications to the International Atomic Energy Agency on January 11, 1978, informing that body, which has been charged with the task of implementing safeguards, that for all future nuclear exports to non-nuclear weapon states, including exports of technical information, safeguards, as set out in the letters, would be required. These letters were the culmination of several years of work and study by a group of nuclear supplier nations concerned with the need to assure comprehensive and credible safeguards. Also during the past year both Australia and the United States adopted nuclear export policies which restrict their future nuclear trade with non-nuclear weapons states to those states having their entire nuclear programme under safeguards. These decisions by two major nuclear exporters reinforce the Canadian decision announced in December 1976 to require comprehensive safeguards as a precondition for exports to non-nuclear weapon states.

Despite the important progress which has been achieved in coordinating international levels of safeguards, important work remains to be done to ensure that increased use of nuclear power does not lead to an increased threat of nuclear proliferation.