

## ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT

"No single international activity...rates higher priority in the opinion of this Government than the pursuit of effective arms-control and arms-limitation agreements," the Prime Minister declared in the House of Commons on October 24, 1969. This statement of Canadian priorities and the role Canada intends to play in arms-control and disarmament deliberations was reflected in the work of the Arms Control and Disarmament Division and in intensified Canadian efforts to meet what the Secretary of State for External Affairs described in his address to the United Nations General Assembly on September 29, 1969, as the supreme challenge of finding "something better than the balance of mutual fear and deterrence on which the present uneasy structure of global security rests".

New horizons were opened with the beginning of talks between the United States and the Soviet Union on the limitation of strategic armaments, and some substantial progress was made in negotiations toward a treaty to establish arms control on a potential nuclear weapons frontier -- the seabed and deep-ocean floor. Canadian membership in NATO provided opportunities to participate in consultations on the strategic-arms limitation talks and in preparation for a NATO proposal of balanced force reductions in Central Europe. Canadian delegations to the Geneva Disarmament Committee and to the United Nations General Assembly played an active role in negotiations and discussions concerning arms control on the seabed, a comprehensive nuclear test ban, and protocols to supplement the Geneva Protocol of 1925 prohibiting chemical and biological warfare.

#### Strategic Arms Limitations Talks (SALT)

The most significant arms-control development of the year was the holding of preliminary meetings in Helsinki from November 17 to December 22 between delegations of the United States and the Soviet Union. The purpose of these meetings was to explore and prepare the ground before entering into negotiations about limiting strategic nuclear weapons. It is significant that the two major nuclear powers agreed to hold formal talks on these critical questions beginning in Vienna on April 16, 1970.

Although Canada is not, of course, a participant in these bilateral discussions between the United States and the Soviet Union, Canadian views and interests were made known and an opportunity to exert influence was provided in the North Atlantic Council during intensive United States consultations with its allies.

#### Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)

Canada deposited its instruments of ratification of the Non-Proliferation Treaty on January 8, 1969 -- the first "near-nuclear" nation to do so. In taking this action to ratify the treaty, which seeks to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and of the capability to acquire them, Canada urged similar action by other states in order to bring the treaty into force as soon as possible. By the end of 1969, some 94 nations had signed