

Another area to which the Canadian Government attaches special significance is disarmament. At this General Assembly, the mid-point between the First and Second Special Sessions on Disarmament, I welcome the much greater attention which the United Nations gives to the subject, although I regret the lack of specific and ratified agreements on further measures of arms control and disarmament. Are the peoples of the world not entitled to feel impatience, for example, that our governments have still failed to negotiate a nuclear test ban treaty which can be accepted and ratified by all states? Or that a treaty to ban chemical weapons remains blocked by disagreement over means of verification?

Canada is committed to breaking the pattern of madness which spiralling rearmament represents. Our recently appointed Special Ambassador for Disarmament will be working at this Session toward the goals set out by Prime Minister Trudeau two years ago at the Special Session on Disarmament, especially those that restrain and cut back the competition in strategic nuclear weapons. Without restraint in this area, we can have little reason for optimism that the proliferation of nuclear weapons around the world can be stopped. As a first step, we will pursue vigorously the cessation of the production of fissionable material for nuclear weapons.

Mr. President, breaking the patterns of the past, adapting to change, improving our collective machinery — these are the emphases we should give to this Assembly's work. When countries revert to outdated type — by hanging on to privileges, using force, keeping self-serving methods of approach to the issues — our collective achievement is diminished.

As an example, may I return briefly to the recent United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea.

The emerging Law of the Sea treaty will be robbed of much of its meaning without universality and durability. Both those conditions will be obtained only if all interested parties commit themselves to a consensus which is fair to all. We have not seen such a consensus in at least one vital area, that of seabed mining. If, for example, the interests of the land-based mineral producers, including Canada and many developing countries, are ignored or overridden by the desire of some states to secure unrestricted access to the mineral riches of the seabed, then the future of the Law of the Sea Treaty may be badly compromised. The problem can only be compounded by states stepping outside of the internationally agreed framework to play the game by their own set of rules.