



Consultative Group Discusses Canada's Role in the Multilateral Disarmament Forums

The Consultative Group on Disarmament and Arms Control Affairs, which includes over 60 representatives of non-governmental organizations, academics and concerned individuals, met at the Department of External Affairs in Ottawa from October 31 to November 2 to discuss Canada's role in the multilateral disarmament forums and ways in which Canada can make a further contribution to international peace and security. This meeting was in keeping with the question posed in the Department of External Affairs Discussion Paper (Green Paper) entitled *Competitiveness and Security* as to whether there are "new practical ideas that Canadians believe we could bring" to discussions in this area.

The Consultative Group meeting was held under the chairmanship of the Ambassador for Disarmament, Mr. Douglas Roche, whose responsibilities include representing Canada in the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly and the United Nations Disarmament Commission. Canada's Ambassadors to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva (Mr. J. Alan Beesley), the Stockholm Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe (Mr. Tom Delworth), and the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction talks in

Vienna (Mr. Tom Hammond), also participated and led the discussion in their respective areas of responsibility.

The Prime Minister of Canada, the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney, provided the keynote address to the Consultative Group on October 31, the first time the Group had ever been addressed by the Prime Minister. (The full text of his address is found on pp. 10-12.)

During the two days of discussions, members of the Consultative Group, on the whole, recognized that Canada had played a constructive and effective role in these forums. However, there was concern expressed over the pace and rather limited achievements of some of these negotiations. There was considerable support for Canadian efforts to promote the role of verification in the arms control process and the Government's research efforts in this area were applauded. The Group also supported the maintenance of a strict interpretation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty and supported Canadian efforts to support the Treaty. A number of proposals for possible action by the Canadian Government were put forth for the Government's consideration. Copies of the final report on the meetings were sent to the Prime Minister, the Secretary

of State for External Affairs and members of the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence (SCEAND), and were circulated widely in Canada.

A special evening session was held on November 1 dealing with the Geneva bilateral negotiations between the USA and USSR on nuclear and space arms. It featured Ambassador James Goodby, formerly the US representative to the Stockholm Conference, and Mr. Eugeni Goussarov, Counsellor at the Soviet Embassy in Ottawa. Each participant provided the Consultative Group with an outline of his Government's approach to the bilateral negotiations in Geneva. The moderator of the discussion was Mr. John Halstead, former Canadian Ambassador to NATO and Bonn.

Members of the Consultative Group will next meet on a regional basis with Ambassador Roche and departmental officials at meetings to be held across Canada from April 14 to May 2 as part of Canada's International Year of Peace programme. The theme of these meetings will be the relationship between disarmament and development, in light of Canada's participation at the International Conference on that subject to be held in Paris from July 15 to August 2.



Left photo: view of Consultative Group meeting. Right photo: Ambassador Douglas Roche (centre) addressing opening session. At left is Firdaus Kharas, Executive Director of UN Association in Canada. At right is Col. Alex Morrison of Canada's mission to UN.