

NATO members who voted against the UN resolutions. In explaining its vote at the 1983 Assembly, Canada recognized "the important symbolic value in the freeze concept as an expression of the desire of mankind to be free from the fear of nuclear war" but also noted that "[Canada] wants significant, balanced and verifiable reductions in the level of nuclear arms in the world...mere declarations are not a meaningful response to this danger....Canada wants the present levels reduced by the immediate unconditional resumption of negotiations on reductions."

Current Canadian Position

At the 40th session of the United Nations three resolutions calling for a nuclear freeze were presented in the First Committee.¹ While these resolutions varied somewhat in their content, Canada, along with most other NATO members, voted against all of them. Although Canada did not offer an explanation of its vote, it appeared to reflect three main concerns: difficulties of verification, an imbalance of forces, and difficulties with negotiation.

At the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence (SCEAND), the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Joe Clark said:

Our view is that if we are dealing with something that is more than declaratory, particularly now that the superpowers appear to be of a mind to contemplate serious reductions which, given the percentages involved, would be bound to be more than 'nuclear junk', it is better to encourage that process than to divert it."²

¹ First Committee Resolutions 40/94H, 40/151C, 40/151E.

² SCEAND Proceedings, 4 December 1985, p. 27.