
Arms Control and Disarmament

Disarmament involves the destruction of existing arms and disbandment of military forces. Arms control is a term more broadly applied to international agreements designed to reduce, but in any event to limit or restrain, the levels and kinds of armaments and military forces, to lessen the potential destructive capability of such forces, and generally to promote greater military-political stability and thereby reduce the risks of war.

Arms control and disarmament agreements are related to direct security concerns of states but may contribute broadly to the lessening of tensions and improvement of political relations. Thus Canada's active participation in international discussions and negotiations on arms control is closely linked to its security interests in the defence of North America and of Western Europe and to its desire to promote international security generally. It is also closely bound to its external political interest in promoting East-West détente and peace and prosperity in the developing areas of the world.

Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT)

The most urgent arms control requirements for Canada and the world relate to nuclear weapons. Situated as it is between the two nuclear superpowers, Canada has a vital interest in seeing arms control measures concluded between the U.S. and U.S.S.R. which will promote the climate of détente between them and reduce the risks of nuclear war. While the SALT talks are bilateral in form, they are related to the direct security concerns of Canada and our NATO allies and have an impact on the whole community of nations and its interest in multilateral arms control.

Since 1972 when the United States and the U.S.S.R. concluded a series of agreements on the limitations of strategic nuclear arms, discussions between the two countries have continued in an effort to

broaden the area of agreement. Thus, at the Vladivostok summit meeting of November 1974, President Ford and General Secretary Brezhnev reached an understanding which set the framework for the negotiation of a further SALT agreement. Negotiations to this end were being carried out in Geneva.

The United States has continued its practice of consulting its NATO allies on the progress of SALT. It has been Canada's desire that the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. should seek further mutual limitations and reductions of their strategic nuclear forces in order to reverse the momentum of the nuclear arms race, reduce the potential destructive capability of nuclear arms, and enhance the stability of the nuclear balance.

Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR)

The most complex of international negotiations relating to military security in which Canada is directly engaged are those taking place in the Conference on the Mutual Reduction of Forces and Armaments and Associated Measures in Central Europe. Involving member countries of NATO and the Warsaw Pact, this opened in Vienna on October 30, 1973. The direct participants on the NATO side are Canada, the United States, Britain, the Federal Republic of Germany, Belgium, The Netherlands and Luxembourg. Warsaw Pact direct participants are the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and the German Democratic Republic.

A general lessening of Cold War tensions in Europe, as well as the general improvements in relations between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., reflected especially in the SALT agreements, had improved the atmosphere of East-West relations. This permitted the Atlantic Alliance and the Warsaw Pact to agree to conduct negotiations aimed at reducing the level of armed confrontation in Central Europe between the two military alliances.

Canada has been a steadfast advocate