

As you know, Canada is a firm supporter of multilateralism. Halifax must again confirm the multilateral commitment of our partners. The United Nations is depending increasingly on the assistance of non-governmental organizations [NGOs] and other regional security organizations in its job of economic and social development, human rights advocacy, and humanitarian aid. I think that better co-ordination between these various stakeholders is not only necessary but beneficial to the international community as a whole.

We see today the proliferation of new global challenges such as environmental deterioration, skyrocketing population growth, uncontrolled migration and organized crime. These are sufficient to convince us that multilateral dialogue is valuable and necessary.

Recent events have underscored the importance of having a strong, credible multilateral system where international security is concerned. Only a month ago, 178 countries made the extraordinary decision to extend indefinitely the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty [NPT], the world's most important arms control agreement. The momentum behind this decision cannot be halted. The NPT includes new members - in particular Ukraine, Algeria and Chile, our next partner in free trade. Countries not possessing nuclear arms have obtained undertakings from the five nuclear powers to work toward the complete elimination of such weapons. Canada is very pleased with this decision and will not let its partners forget their disarmament obligations.

We must take advantage of this momentum to complete a nuclear test ban agreement by 1996. I referred a moment ago to political will. With political will, I believe we can reach such an agreement. But we must get down to it and put some friendly pressure on some of our partners.

We must also begin negotiations to prohibit the production of fissile material for military purposes. For the time being, this means continuing to support Russia and the United States in their bilateral efforts to disarm, and steering the other nuclear states onto the path toward disarmament.

We must also talk about land mines, weapons that kill daily and indiscriminately. Each week, land mines kill or maim over 150 civilians. To end this tragedy, we must strengthen the multilateral instruments available to us, particularly the Convention on Conventional Weapons. I definitely intend to use Halifax as a forum for continuing the discussions that I have had with my colleagues on this issue on various occasions.

This summit will also give me the opportunity to pursue discussions on the international trade in conventional weapons, a theme that is of deep concern to me. Together, we must seek ways to reduce this scourge. Between 1986 and 1993, some 71.7 per cent of arms sales were to developing countries. If we act in unison, the international