

Sharing as we all do the feeling of frustration at the lack of positive action in the CCD, it is not surprising that there is wide support for a world disarmament conference in which all nuclear powers should participate. Faced by the fact that some nuclear powers have made it clear that they are not yet ready to do so, there are some delegations that believe that this need not be an obstacle and that the planning for such a conference should proceed regardless. My delegation sympathizes with those who feel this way but we believe that to follow this course would be a case of the heart ruling the head.

The hard fact we must face is that proposals for disarmament may be endorsed by 100 or more nations but would be valueless unless the nuclear powers supported them. Indeed, such proposals could be harmful if the consequences were to make more difficult the enlistment of the support of all nuclear powers. It is for this reason that the Canadian delegation believes that, under the circumstances, we should continue each year to take advantage of the General Assembly to review the situation with respect to arms control and disarmament, and express ourselves forcibly on desirable measures and on obstacles to progress, but that we should reserve our judgment on the timing of a world disarmament conference -- or any substitute -- until the prospects for progress become brighter than they are at the moment.

In conclusion I should like to echo the thought I expressed in this debate a year ago. Security does not lie in the possession of ever-larger arsenals. The real national interest of every country on this earth will be furthered by seeking a broader international interest -- by making effective agreements to limit and reduce the levels of armaments and the size of forces in the context of other measures that can promote constructive and stable relations between states. In this way the threat of war will cease to be a credible tool in the hands of governments. This is the goal we must all pursue. Even if our annual debate at the General Assembly at times sounds tedious and repetitious, -- even if the UN's negotiating body, the CCD, appears to be making no headway, we must keep up the pressure. We cannot afford the luxury of yielding to boredom or discouragement and in so doing neglect the vitally important issues with which we are grappling.