

Because the trilateral discussions failed to produce agreement, the debate in the UN General Assembly took on more significance. In accordance with the views already noted, Canada co-sponsored a resolution calling on the states involved to conclude a truly comprehensive and verifiable test-ban treaty, and to attempt to complete their negotiations before the meetings of the Geneva Conference on Disarmament started. In addition, a resolution of the non-aligned states, also supported by Canada, called on the nuclear-weapon states to refrain from testing until a treaty had been agreed on. Canada continues to attach great importance to a comprehensive treaty and remains hopeful that an acceptable one will be reached in the near future.

Chemical weapons

During 1978, the United States and the Soviet Union continued their bilateral discussions with a view to tabling a joint draft treaty on chemical weapons at the Conference on Disarmament. After two years of discussions, many of the original problems have been overcome, but further work on verification seems necessary. As a party to the 1925 Geneva Protocol, which prohibits the use of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons, and the 1972 convention, which bans the production and possession of bacteriological weapons, Canada has taken an active role in all multilateral discussions concerned with limiting the use of such weapons.

Canada is one of a number of nations that have intensified efforts to broaden their expertise in dealing with the problems that may eventually be faced in verifying a ban on chemical weapons. In order to maintain the momentum towards an agreement on measures to prohibit the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and to bring about their destruction, Canada co-sponsored a resolution at the 1978 UN General Assembly urging the vigorous pursuit of this objective. Canada is also co-sponsor of a resolution calling for a conference in 1980 to review the use of bacteriological (biological) weapons.

Security Council

During Canada's second year on the Security Council, behind-the-scenes negotiations in search of a basis for consensus resolutions were often effective, engendering a sense of co-operation. The situation in southern Africa again dominated the agenda. Other areas of international conflict, such as the Middle East, were dealt with largely outside the UN, though a new peacekeeping force was despatched to that region, this time to Lebanon, as noted below.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs publicly regretted the tendency of the Council to ignore certain situations that constituted threats to international peace and security, and reiterated his suggestion that the Council might be made more effective by occasional private and informal meetings at the foreign-minister level. While not