



# Statements and Speeches

---

No. 86/3

## ARMS CONTROL OBJECTIVES

Statement by J. Alan Beesley, Canadian Ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament, before that Conference, Geneva, February 4, 1986.

Mr. President . . . As we began our deliberations here just a year ago, there was a note of cautious expectation in the air. The governments of the USSR and the US had only recently agreed to resume negotiations on the central arms control and disarmament issues of our time. Moreover, in taking this step, which entailed considerable statesmanship on each side, the two governments set themselves agreed negotiating objectives which are impressive in their scope and comprehensiveness, namely, "The prevention of an arms race in space and its termination on earth; the limitation and reduction of nuclear arms; and the strengthening of strategic stability." They stated as an ultimate goal "the complete elimination of nuclear weapons." We, and the watching world, saw a glimmer of hope.

Now, little more than a year later, that flame of hope not only remains alive, but burns a little brighter. Negotiators for the two governments completed three rounds of negotiations in Geneva during 1985. President Reagan and Secretary-General Gorbachev met in Geneva in November and issued an important Joint Statement, affirming *inter alia* the intent to accelerate the work of their negotiations. The fourth round of negotiations is already underway.

Happily, this process has produced more than rhetoric. Detailed and substantive proposals and counter-proposals have been made, reflecting a readiness on both sides to agree to major reductions in their respective nuclear arsenals as a first step toward implementing the agreed negotiating objectives in their entirety. Thus, in the Canadian view, the good faith and serious intent of each of the parties to these negotiations have been persuasively demonstrated. We applaud the constructive beginning which has been made in this all-important negotiation. We recognize that the negotiation is likely to be long and arduous and that to expect quick, comprehensive solutions on the many outstanding issues would be unrealistic. We urge the two parties to continue their negotiating efforts with all the determination, skill and patience that the importance of the subject matter demands, as they have pledged to do. Canada, for its part, pledges that in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and all other relevant international fora, we will support, facilitate and attempt to reinforce these crucial bilateral negotiations.

It is a reality of our time that the US and USSR, by their separate and joint decisions, will determine central aspects of any international framework for preserving global security. But of course, the establishment of a stable basis for enduring international peace and security must not and cannot be a proprietary monopoly of the two superpowers. Their negotiations are of vital concern to all peoples; as Canada's Prime Minister has recently affirmed, peace and security is everybody's business. It is for every responsible government, through its national policies and by constructive participation in international fora such as the Conference on Disarmament where such issues are addressed, to make its own contribution to the collective international effort to come to grips with the complex and seemingly