



# Statements and Speeches

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No. 73/22

## REDUCING THE CREDIBILITY OF WAR AS A TOOL OF GOVERNMENT

Statement in the First Committee of the Twenty-eighth Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations in New York on October 24, 1973, by Mr. W.H. Barton, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Canada to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament at Geneva.

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The repeated outbreaks of war in the Middle East vividly illustrate the point which is fundamental to our discussions -- that war is a futile instrument for the resolution of differences between states. Moreover, each new outbreak of warfare, wherever it takes place, presents a danger of spilling over into an even wider area, with all that implies in escalation in size of forces and armaments employed. Mutual deterrence and self-restraint on the part of the nuclear powers are powerful factors preventing the extension of a regional war into a general war. But can we take it for granted that these impediments will always suffice? For most of the world they are not good enough. We want effective international action to reduce and ultimately remove the threat of war -- which is why we are here today and no doubt will be back next year and in the years ahead.

This annual debate provides an opportunity to look back over developments during the preceding 12 months, to draw a balance-sheet of the current situation, and to give thought to approaches that may contribute to progress in the period to come.

It has been the custom of this Committee to devote its particular attention to the work of the Committee of the Conference on Disarmament (CCD). This is fitting, since that Committee reports directly to the General Assembly and in a sense acts as its continuing and expert forum on arms control and disarmament between sessions. At the same time, however, the Assembly's assessment of the current situation would be incomplete if it failed to take into consideration developments elsewhere in pursuit of limitations, reductions or restrictions on the instruments of war.

As will be clear from the report of the CCD (Document A/9141), two subjects dominated discussion in the CCD during the past year -- the question of a comprehensive nuclear test ban and the question of a prohibition of chemical weapons. These are the issues the General

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