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Canada's National Agenda for Peace

On October 16, Canada's Ambassador for Disarmament, Mr. Douglas Roche, made the Canadian address to the United Nations First Committee, the main UN General Assembly forum for arms control, disarmament and international security matters. Following are excerpts from that statement.

"Canada, which has a seat at every multilateral disarmament forum, is determined to strengthen the multilateral process in building an enduring peace. We bring to these forums a Canadian policy on arms control and disarmament, which focuses on six areas:

- negotiated radical reductions in nuclear forces and the enhancement of strategic stability;
- maintenance and strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation regime;
- support for a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty as a fundamental and abiding objective of Canadian foreign policy;
- negotiation of a global chemical weapons ban;
- prevention of an arms race in outer space;
- confidence-building measures to facilitate the reduction of military forces in Europe and elsewhere.

To support this policy, the Canadian Government has developed a Programme of Action for the remaining half of the Second Disarmament Decade. Concentrating on practical measures, the Programme aims at laying the groundwork for the creation of confidence and trust vital to achieving disarmament agreements.

With an annual budget of one million dollars, the Department of External Affairs, Verification Research Division, concentrates on several key issues relating to a Comprehensive Test Ban, a global chemical weapons convention and the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Both the UNSSOD I Final Document and the Declaration of the Second Disarmament Decade recognized that arms control and disarmament agreements must provide for adequate measures of verification. Some allege that verification is a smokescreen to prevent agreement. But that is not Canada's view. We



Douglas Roche

believe that verification is indispensable because meaningful arms control agreements that will endure cannot be negotiated on the basis of trust alone.

To advance work on the verification of a CTB, Canada will expand seismic research by upgrading our large seismic facility in Yellowknife, in northern Canada. As well, we are continuing work designed to differentiate between small earthquakes and underground nuclear tests. We have participated substantially in the International Seismic Data Exchange.

To support the negotiations on a global chemical weapons ban, Canada has lent its expertise to investigating allegations of chemical weapons use and will shortly present to the UN a manual of procedures for use in such investigations. As well, Canada has undertaken specialized research on a portable kit for the detection, identification and quantification of certain mycotoxins. During its past session, the CD's progress towards concluding a chemical weapons convention was minimal. We call upon all members to redouble their efforts in the urgent conclusion of a global chemical weapons ban.

On the Outer Space question, Canada welcomed the establishment of an *Ad Hoc* Working Group to discuss in greater detail this complex issue. In support of the CD's deliberations, Canada has sub-

mitted a comprehensive study of existing international law relating to arms control and outer space. This survey identifies a number of important themes for examination if an international treaty preventing an arms race in space is to be successfully written. It also serves as an excellent example of the evolution and contemporary relevance of international law to the disarmament process. Canada is also working on the application of space-to-space remote sensing for arms control and disarmament purposes. Follow-up work on the application of space-to-ground sensing is planned.

While much of the world's attention is focused on nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, there is a fourth weapon of mass destruction — radiological weapons. Although these weapons were identified by the United Nations almost 40 years ago, there is, as yet, no international agreement of any kind regarding radiological weapons. Since these weapons do not yet exist, the international community has a rare opportunity to prohibit a potentially devastating weapons system, to prevent even its conception, and to do so while the political obstacles to such a ban are at a minimum. There is an urgent need to conclude a Radiological Weapons Convention.

Since 1979, the United States and the Soviet Union have been agreed on the basic text of a treaty to ban radiological weapons. Despite the fact that there has been little or no objection to the substance of the draft treaty, agreement has eluded the Conference on Disarmament which has tried to meet the concerns of some nations to provide, in the same treaty, provision for adequate protection of peaceful nuclear facilities. We believe that agreement on a radiological weapons ban should not await the resolution of this particular problem.

On September 25, in his speech to the General Assembly, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, Secretary of State for External Affairs, called on the US and the Soviet Union to conclude a verifiable treaty banning radiological weapons. As well, he indicated Canada's immediate readiness to sign such a treaty.

Canada's Programme of Action, then, is comprised of specific, practical contributions designed to make the arms control process viable and the goal of disarmament realizable."