

Seabed Arms Control Treaty

The Treaty banning the emplacement of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction (i.e., CBW) on the seabed and deep-ocean floor beyond a 12-mile coastal band, which was endorsed by the twenty-sixth General Assembly, was opened for signature on February 11, 1971. Canada signed on that date. The Treaty will enter into force as soon as it has been ratified by 22 governments, including the three depositary states -- the United States, the Soviet Union and Britain.

World Disarmament Conference

In September 1971, the Soviet Union submitted to the twenty-sixth session of the General Assembly a draft resolution calling for the convening of a World Disarmament Conference and suggesting that a date for it be set by the end of 1972. The Canadian position was that, if it were to be a constructive move towards arms control and disarmament, it would be desirable for such a conference to be preceded by adequate preparation, to include among its participants all nuclear powers, and to be held within the framework of the United Nations. During discussion of this item at the twenty-sixth General Assembly, lack of agreement among member states as to the desirability of, and the terms of reference for, such a conference resulted in the replacement of the original draft resolution by a resolution sponsored by a group of non-aligned countries, which advocated that careful consideration be given to the convening, following adequate preparation, of a World Disarmament Conference open to all states and invited states to inform the Secretary-General of their views.

Conference of the Committee on Disarmament

The representation of the People's Republic of China in the United Nations is an event of important potential significance for the comprehensiveness of future arms-control and disarmament negotiations. In particular, it raises the questions of China's future relation with the CCD and of related problems connected with the structure of the Committee that will no doubt have to be examined by the Committee next year. Canada has long been an advocate of the need to engage both China and France in such efforts.