

## First Committee Concludes Productive Session

Profound changes in the international scene, most dramatically in the former USSR, and important progress in East-West arms control and disarmament provided the backdrop for the work of the First Committee at the 46th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA 46). These factors contributed to one of the most productive First Committee sessions ever, from a Canadian perspective.

The First Committee adopted 40 resolutions and four decisions on disarmament and international security issues, and two resolutions on the subject of Antarctica. The number of resolutions adopted was the lowest in several years — a reflection of the continued trend towards merging competing resolutions and rationalizing the Committee's work. The trend indicates growing consensus in some areas and, in general, a cooperative and non-confrontational approach by delegations.

The most important achievement of the session and the issue that overshadowed all others in the First Committee was the negotiation and adoption of a resolution establishing a UN arms register (see article on pages 1-3). The implementation of this resolution will represent a significant and tangible contribution by the First Committee to multilateral arms control and disarmament efforts. The broad support the resolution received, and the flexibility demonstrated by a wide range of states involved in its consideration, augurs well for the future of the First Committee as a forum that can advance the multilateral disarmament agenda in a concrete way.

Another noteworthy achievement was the adoption of a single resolution on the issue of a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty (CTBT). Since 1980, two competing resolutions had been adopted on this issue, each of which outlined a different approach to the objective of a CTBT. The adoption of a merged resolution at UNGA 46 thus represents an important step towards global consensus on how to move towards the CTBT goal.

The resolution (46/29) reaffirms the General Assembly's conviction that a CTBT is a matter of priority and urges

the Conference on Disarmament (CD) to intensify its substantive work on issues related to a CTBT. These include structure and scope of a CTBT as well as verification and compliance. Resolution 46/29 was adopted by a vote of 149 in favour, two against (France, USA), and four abstentions (China, Israel, Micronesia, UK). It received the broadest support of any resolution on this issue in recent years. Canada has traditionally been one of a "core group" of co-sponsors that drafts one of the two CTBT resolutions. At UNGA 46, the Canadian delegation again played an active role in finding compromise language and in promoting support for the merged resolution.

The First Committee also adopted its annual resolution on the subject of a chemical weapons convention. Canada and Poland take turns introducing the resolution each year; Canada provided the lead at UNGA 46. This resolution "strongly urges the Conference on Disarmament, as a matter of the highest priority" to resolve outstanding differences and achieve a final agreement during its 1992 session. The fact that the resolution was adopted by consensus makes it a strong global statement which Canada hopes will give political impetus to the successful conclusion of a chemical

weapons convention during the CD's current session.

As in the past, Canada introduced a resolution on the "Prohibition of production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes." The UNGA 46 resolution was amended to include a positive reference to the unilateral nuclear weapons initiatives announced by Presidents Bush and Gorbachev in September and October respectively. As Ambassador for Disarmament Peggy Mason stated when introducing this resolution to the First Committee, these welcome developments "enhance prospects for the realization" of the goal of a prohibition on the production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes. The resolution was adopted with a record level of support although, as in the past, this majority regrettably did not include four nuclear-weapon states. The vote was 152 in favour, two against (France, USA) and three abstentions (China, India, UK).

Canada believes that the positive outcome of the UNGA 46 First Committee provides a solid foundation for continued revitalization of this forum in the years ahead, enabling the First Committee to effectively advance multilateral arms control and disarmament objectives. ■

### Canada Welcomes Korean Declaration

On January 2, Secretary of State for External Affairs Barbara McDougall praised the joint declaration on a nuclear-free Korean peninsula reached between South and North Korea on December 31. "This important event is a further milestone in the progress realized in recent months towards improving relations between the two Koreas and lessening tensions on the peninsula," said Mrs. McDougall.

In the declaration, South and North Korea agree that neither side will develop, possess or use nuclear weapons or possess nuclear reprocessing and uranium enrichment facilities, and that nuclear energy will be used only for peaceful purposes. The declaration also provides for the creation of a joint committee to implement inspections of nuclear facilities in both countries to verify the denuclearization of the peninsula. The declaration was to be signed by the Prime Ministers of South and North Korea on January 20, and will be subject to ratification in both capitals.

Canada also welcomes North Korea's undertaking to sign a full-scope nuclear safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency in accordance with its obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. We urge North Korea to sign and implement such an agreement without delay.