

The focus of attention on nuclear arms should not, however, be allowed to deflect attention from the need for progress in arms reduction in the field of conventional arms. This question must be addressed with no less urgency than that attached to nuclear questions. It is in this area that regional approaches to arms control and disarmament may well provide the best returns.

The negotiation of a convention prohibiting chemical weapons and eliminating their stockpiles must be regarded as a matter of paramount importance. This Session should unequivocally condemn their use. While progress has been accomplished, greater efforts must be made to conclude an effectively verifiable comprehensive ban on chemical weapons.

Until such an agreement is reached, every step must be taken to prevent the transfer to other states of chemical weapons, and to follow the example of those countries which have moved to control the export of highly toxic chemicals and to institute a "Warning List" procedure for others.

The prevention of an arms race in space remains a major goal of Canadian policy and a matter which concerns us all. Canada will continue to work to ensure that outer space is developed for peaceful purposes.

Verification is essential to the arms control and disarmament process. It has been a major preoccupation for Canada and we are encouraged that so many speakers in this forum share that priority.

Already, a welcome new international consensus has developed on this subject. In May, last year, the Disarmament Commission established a Working Group on Verification which Canada chaired. This year, the Working Group adopted a report which included sixteen verification principles amplifying the provisions on verification agreed at the First Special Session. I would urge all Members of the United Nations to reinforce the efforts of the Disarmament Commission and subscribe fully to these principles.

To help promote the cause of multilateralism in this field, we and the Netherlands have proposed that an in-depth study be undertaken by a United Nations Group of Experts. Such a report will advance international understanding of verification within the UN framework, and help develop an appropriate role for the Organization in this field. I ask that Members of the United Nations support this proposal.