

The international community accomplished a significant step forward with the NPT, and we can look back with satisfaction at the fact that there are now some 115 signatories. At the same time, however, it should be recognized that the NPT is an initial treaty and that it needs to be perfected. I hope that in historical terms the NPT will be considered as a watershed, as it has provided the vehicle for a large majority of UN member countries to express formally and for the first time their total renunciation of nuclear weapons and weapons capability. I would also hope that the NPT will spawn new, more comprehensive and more truly universal treaties.

In this regard, it cannot be ignored that although the NPT emphasizes the non-discriminatory transfer of peaceful nuclear technology, it also provides, under Article VI, for the rapid and effective movement towards disarmament and the de-escalation of the arms race on the part of nuclear weapons states. The fact that this key element of the NPT remains unfulfilled suggests to me that a tangible move towards disarmament on behalf of the superpowers represents the best possible means to indicate, with sincerity, their belief in the legitimacy of non-proliferation.

Accordingly, in the context of the United Nations and the IAEA, Canada is prepared to seek international consensus on the development of principles which would result in a more universal and effective approach to non-proliferation. Such principles should include a formal renunciation of nuclear explosive devices and an agreement to permit the safeguarding of all nuclear activities throughout the entire range of the nuclear fuel cycle as fundamental to the creation of a stable and permanent non-proliferation régime. Under such conditions, bilateral nuclear commitments could then be subsumed into a truly equitable and responsible international order.

It is my belief that the moment has arrived for genuine movement through collective institutional and policy approaches towards the realization of these objectives. If states fail to engage this challenge in a manner which is both imaginative and just, the prognosis for the uncontrolled horizontal proliferation of nuclear capabilities will remain more of a threat than an opportunity for enhanced international cooperation.

One of the underlying themes of my remarks today has been public understanding, which has been a continuing objective of the Pugwash Movement. The challenge of promoting greater public understanding faces governments and non-governmental organizations alike. In the period between the first and second Special Sessions, there were a number of UN