

We live in an age of contradictions:

- famine in Africa, surplus food mountains in North America;
- magnificent technology, mass unemployment;
- global air travel, terrorism in the skies;
- mass communication, less understanding;
- more weapons, less security;
- the liberation of humanity through science, the enslavement of the nuclear bomb.

When we understand these great contradictions, which characterize the paradox of our times -- so much danger at a time of so much creativity -- we begin to see why it is so difficult to make progress in disarmament measures.

Nations pledge disarmament and still make weapons. How can this be so?

It is because the technological meaning of the nuclear age has not been incorporated into global security systems. Scientific expertise has outpaced the human development of the global community. Law has been left behind, ethical values side tracked and resources misused in the never-ending -- and impossible -- quest for security via technology.

This is a profound question, and it is at the root of any serious examination of the problems and prospects for world peace.

If we cannot leave the security interests of our society in the hands of philosophers and educators, it is nonetheless necessary for philosophy and education to infuse the politics of survival.

That is the principal reason why it is becoming increasingly necessary to consider better ways of preparing coming generations for the paramount concern of any educated person: the attaining of a just and lasting peace. The University of Alberta is making a signal contribution to enlarging the field of studies with the International Institute for Peace Education.

I have come here not to tell you how to teach peace. That is within your competence not mine. Rather, I am here to reinforce your desire to develop a new generation of global citizens. My message is that there must be a vibrant development of peace studies across the world. It is essential to form minds with a deeper understanding of the integral demands of the human condition today.

In order to bridge the gap between philosophy and action, I propose to spend a few minutes outlining the actual work now going on in the various disarmament forums in the world, focusing on Canada's role in these negotiations.