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Canada-US Consultations on Strategic and Missile Defence Initiatives

Media Book



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KEY MESSAGES: MEETING RESULTS

- Pursuant to President Bush's May 1 speech, we welcome the opportunity to sit down with our US colleagues to discuss the strategic framework and, in that context, missile defence.
- This is the start of a process.
- No decisions have been made, nor will they be for some time.
- There is no concrete proposal on the table and we will not respond definitively until there is one and we have had time to consider its implications fully.
- The meeting was an opportunity to hear current US thinking on their ongoing deterrence review process.
- It was also an opportunity to ask some direct questions and to make Canadian views and concerns known. It was a good beginning. Lots of work clearly remains to be done.

KEY MESSAGES: CANADIAN POSITION

- In the post Cold War environment, we share many US concerns about new challenges to both national and global security, including threats from intra-state conflict, from terrorist attack and from the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including ballistic missiles. We therefore welcome continued discussion with the US as to the best means to respond to these threats.
- Missile defence may be able to play a role in this respect. It need not be incompatible with arms control and disarmament.
- However, missile defence must enhance global security without damaging the international arms control and disarmament regime. Continuing US engagement and leadership in multilateral arms control and disarmament is essential for strategic stability.
- We welcome US consultative efforts with Allies, Russia and China and will be carefully assessing the results of their ongoing efforts.
- We attach particular importance to the US/ Russia talks and the future of the ABM Treaty. If the ABM Treaty is to be amended or replaced, we would want to be assured that the new strategic framework makes a similar contribution to global security.
- We also welcome US pursuit of a dialogue with China on these issues.
- We welcome US intentions to reduce their numbers of missiles. Reductions in the world's total number of nuclear weapons are to be applauded. We look forward to learning how these reductions could be codified internationally.
- We are urging the US to take all the time needed to fully explore the implications of a decision on the deployment of a ballistic missile defence system and to find a way forward that maintains global strategic stability.

CANADA-US RELATIONS

Q. Is Canada's position on missile defence affecting our relationship with the US?

Suggested Reply

- Canada and the US are each other's closest allies and most important trading partners.
- Canada and the US enjoy a unique cooperative relationship in security and defence. We have one of the most intense and connected defence relationships in the world.
- Canada and the US regularly consult on a broad range of important security issues, including missile defence. The frankness and openness of our exchanges is a good barometer of the health of our relationship.

Q. What is Canada's reaction to President Bush's May 1 speech to the National Defence University?

Suggested Reply

- President Bush's remarks have helped clarify a number of issues surrounding his administration's plans for managing the existing security and defence environment, including missile defence.
- We expect to have a clearer picture of US intentions once the new administration's strategic and defence reviews have been concluded.
- We welcome the President's commitment to consultations with US allies, including Canada, and with other concerned states such as Russia and China. We look forward to discussions with the US in this context, both bilaterally and at NATO.

BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENCE- DEBRIS, THREAT

Q. Media reports have suggested that the US BMD system could intercept incoming missiles over Canadian territory, resulting in nuclear debris being dispersed within our borders. Is this true? If so, what is Canada prepared to do to deal with this eventuality? Have we expressed our concerns to the US on this issue?

Suggested Reply

- The question of debris is something we will be discussing in our ongoing consultations with our US counterparts.
- Debris is mainly a concern for "terminal phase intercepts" in the final stages of missile flight. However, impact would occur well above the earth's surface, and the missiles would be literally vapourized, by the kinetic impact of an intercept, leaving only small particles, much of which would burn up on re-entry into the atmosphere.
- We should be clear that the risk of debris falling in Canada is significantly less than the risk of not intercepting an attacking missile.

Q. Why are ballistic missile threats of such concern when an equally powerful weapon can be delivered anonymously by a ship sailing into a harbour?

Suggested Reply

- There are many different ways that weapons of mass destruction can be delivered. Each country must determine which threats to its security it considers the most serious and the most likely.
- There are a wide variety of measures to respond to threats, including confidence building measures, diplomatic negotiations, interdiction of suspect ships or individuals, as well as defensive measures.
- It is then a question of determining which measures provide the most cost effective means of responding to these threats.
- Determining the best response to the new threats in the post Cold War environment is one factor we are discussing with the US.

CANADIAN PARTICIPATION

Q. Will Canada participate in a missile defence system?

Suggested Reply

- The US is reviewing its options for ballistic missile defence to provide protection not only for the US, but also for deployed forces and for allies and friends. The US has not taken any decisions itself on the architecture of the system.
- We will need to know more about the approach that the US will take before we can take a position on this issue.

Q. The US ballistic missile defence system is expected to cost a great deal of money. If Canada were to participate, what would be the costs to Canada?

Suggested Reply

- The new US administration has only just begun its consultations with friends and allies on missile defence and it is still reviewing its plans. The US has not taken any decisions itself on the architecture of the system. Consequently, it is not known what the system might cost.
- Until the architecture is known, and until the Canadian government decided whether and how it might participate, we cannot begin to consider the question of costs.
- President Bush spoke of a system capable of protecting all of the allies and the "common responsibility" they share with the US to provide protection. What this might mean has yet to be elaborated.

CANADIAN PARTICIPATION (cont.)

Q. If Canada were to agree to participate in BMD, do you envision any ballistic missile defence installations in Canada?

Suggested Reply

- The ballistic missile defence system proposed by the Clinton Administration did not require Canadian territory.
- Little is known about the architecture of the missile defence system being considered by the Bush administration. It is not known whether they envision any installations in Canada.
- Any such step would, of course, require Canadian agreement.

SHIFT IN CANADA'S POSITION

Q. Has there been a shift in Canada's position under the current Foreign Minister that seeks to be more accommodating to US defence aspirations? Is the government paving the way to support US plans for missile defence?

Suggested Reply

- There is no shift in this government's approach to US proposals for missile defence.
- Canada has not taken a stance for or against US plans for missile defence which are still evolving and are currently under review.
- We have been clear to the US in the past, and we are continuing to make clear our concerns about the possible implications of missile defence for global strategic stability and the potential for it to spark a new arms race and undermine the existing non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament regime.
- We share US concerns about new threats to both national and global security, including threats from intra-state conflict, from terrorist attack and from the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.
- Canada is continuing to engage the US on how best to address current security threats, whether through increased diplomatic efforts, negotiated agreements, or through some form of missile defence. Canada will continue to assess US plans for missile defence as they emerge.
- The position that Canada ultimately adopts will reflect careful consideration of all the facts and will be predicated on what is best for Canada and global security as a whole.
- Canada welcomes US willingness to deepen its dialogue with allies and other concerned countries—including Russia and China.
- We are urging the US to take all the time needed to fully explore the implications of their plans for missile defence and to find a way forward that maintains global strategic stability and that advances the security of the US, as well of all its allies.

SHIFT IN CANADA'S POSITION (cont.)

Q. Do Ambassador Westdal's comments on May 8, before SCFAIT, signal a change in Canada's stance towards US plans for missile defence?

Suggested Reply

- There has been no change in Canada's approach to this issue.
- Our position is well known: we have not taken a stance for or against US plans for missile defence for the simple reason that these plans are currently under review and have yet to be finalized.

NORAD

Q. Would the deployment by the US of a missile defence system involve NORAD?

Suggested Reply

- Ballistic missile defence is not a NORAD mission.
- BMD cannot become a NORAD mission without Canadian agreement.

Q. Would NORAD have a future if we declined to participate in BMD?

Suggested Reply

- The current NORAD missions of aerospace warning and control are critical to both Canada and the United States. They will remain important, even if Canada were to decide not to participate in BMD.
- As a result, even if we declined to participate in a missile defence system, NORAD would remain central to our relationship.

Q. Assuming Canada were to participate, do you believe that it will be necessary to revise or even to re-write the NORAD Agreement?

Suggested Reply

- The NORAD Agreement states that *"the expansion of binational cooperation... could evolve if both nations agree. Both Governments undertake to ensure that full and meaningful consultations on aerospace defense cooperation take place when requested by either party."*
- For ballistic missile defence to become a NORAD mission, Canada would have to agree and it is expected that the NORAD agreement would need to be amended.

MISSILE DEFENCE RESEARCH AND BMDO

Q. Is Canada participating in missile defence research?

Suggested Reply

- The 1994 Defence White Paper and the current NORAD agreement support cooperation in research and consultation on missile warning systems and ballistic missile defence provided it is compliant with the ABM Treaty and other agreements; cost effective and affordable; supportive of Canadian defence needs; and built upon missions already performed by the Canadian Forces.
- Canada is conducting modest research into missile defence in cooperation with the US and in the NATO context.
- We do not consider that our current cooperation conflicts with our support for the ABM Treaty.

Q. Is the Canadian officer at the Ballistic Missile Defence Organization (BMDO) involved in ballistic missile defence activity?

Suggested Reply

- We are in the process of posting a Canadian liaison officer to the US Ballistic Missile Defense Organization. This, in no way, implies that Canada has taken a position with respect to US plans for missile defence.
- This liaison officer is not involved in ballistic missile defence activity or research.
- He is being posted to help Canada stay abreast of key developments in the US program, as a basis for future decisions of the Canadian government.

CONSULTATIONS WITH CANADIANS

Q. When will the government consult with Canadians on this issue?

Suggested Reply

- The consultations with US officials on May 15, is the beginning of what we hope will be a meaningful and measured dialogue to explore the issues raised by the US on the strategic framework and missile defence.
- Many issues and details need to be considered. US thinking and plans are evolving.
- The government remains open to hearing the views of concerned Canadians.
- Indeed, on May 10-11, officials met with representatives of Canadian non-governmental organizations and academics to discuss the full range of non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament issues. They also met with representatives of the Middle Powers Initiative, led by Senator Roche on May 8.
- I assure you that, as the US plans take shape, we will engage in further consultations with concerned Canadians on this important issue

ABM TREATY

Q. Does ballistic missile defence violate the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty?

Suggested Reply

- The development and deployment of certain missile defence systems would be contrary to the existing Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty of 1972. The US is pursuing discussions with Russia on this matter.

Q. Is Canada opposed to amending the ABM Treaty?

Suggested Reply

- The cooperative security relationship between the US and Russia, which is currently embodied in the ABM Treaty, is a key to strategic stability and an important foundation for international efforts on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.
- While the ABM Treaty can be amended, as it has been in the past, care should be taken not to damage a system that has, for almost 30 years, underpinned nuclear restraint and allowed for nuclear reductions.

Q. What is Canada's position on the possible abrogation of the ABM Treaty?

Responsive Only

- This is a bilateral treaty which Canada is not a party to. It can be amended by mutual consent and we are encouraging the United States and Russia to negotiate any changes or new arrangement they are seeking bilaterally. At the same time, we encourage all countries to respect their treaty obligations.

OTHER ARMS CONTROL ISSUES

Q. What are the implications of missile defence for other arms control issues?

Suggested Reply

- Multilateral negotiation of binding international instruments has been a key element in the successful pursuit of global restraint, reduction and elimination of important weapons systems over the past 50 years. The participation and often the leadership of the US in such endeavours has been essential. We look forward to continued partnership with the US in this field.
- In this regard, Canada continues to support early entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the negotiation of a compliance protocol to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and multilateral agreement on an International Code of Conduct to combat ballistic missile proliferation.
- We also support agreement on a convention to ban the actual basing of weapons in space, which we regard as essential to protecting valuable orbital assets both civilian (an increasingly important sector of our economy) and military (where non-weapons missions contribute significantly to international peace and security).

Q. Does this mean Canada is de-emphasizing multilateral approaches to non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament?

Suggested Reply

- No. Canada regards the international legal framework of non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament agreements, complemented by multilaterally-negotiated voluntary norms and export control mechanisms, as fundamental to international peace and security, and hence to Canadian security.
- The centrepiece of this framework is the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which addresses both non-proliferation and disarmament. Other multilateral instruments support and strengthen it.

OTHER ARMS CONTROL ISSUES (cont.)

Q. What is Canada doing to promote Non-Proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament (NACD) multilaterally?

Suggested Reply

- Canada is active in promoting non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament in every appropriate international forum.
- Canada chaired a subsidiary body on regional issues at the May 2000 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference and was instrumental in bringing that conference to a successful conclusion.
- We have been vigorously pursuing follow-up to the NPT Review's Action Plan. Canada has ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-ban Treaty (CTBT) and is campaigning for other countries to ratify in the lead up to the September 2001 CTBT Entry-into-Force Conference.
- We introduced a successful resolution in support of a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) in the UN General Assembly in the Autumn of 2000, and intend to work for resolutions at this year's General Assembly which will move the global disarmament agenda forward.
- While presiding over the Conference on Disarmament (CD) in Geneva in January-February of this year, Canada explored every avenue to end the current stalemate in the CD and bring about a resumption of negotiations for an FMCT.
- Canada is meanwhile advocating the establishment of a convention on the non-weaponisation of Outer Space.
- Canada will chair the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), beginning in September 2001 and is working to advance an international code of conduct against missile proliferation.
- Canada is active in negotiations taking place in Geneva for a verification protocol for the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC).
- Canada was one of the moving forces behind the NATO "Paragraph 32" review which gave a NATO imprimatur to the NPT Review's Action Plan.

OTHER ARMS CONTROL ISSUES (cont.)

Q. Isn't Canada subordinating NACD to other bilateral political and economic interests?

Suggested Reply

- On the contrary, we are using bilateral diplomacy to advance our NACD agenda.
- Our recently established diplomatic relations with North Korea allow us to engage that country.
- The increased high-level contacts between Canada and India give us an enhanced channel to communicate our NACD message.
- We are speaking with the USA and other allies, and with Russia and China, in the context of the excellent relations we enjoy with them.

WEAPONS IN SPACE

Q. What is Canada's reaction to US Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld's plans for a revitalized Air Force Space Command, notably his intention to consider developing space-based weapons to protect US military satellites?

Suggested Reply

- Outer space remains the last environment in which humanity has not deployed weapons.
- Canada and other nations are increasingly reliant on satellites for their economic and national security.
- Canada is opposed to the basing of weapons in space given the likelihood that this will simply provoke an escalatory deployment by other states who feel that their economic and security interests have been challenged.
- We want to prevent an arms race in outer space before one begins. Canada is therefore seeking to negotiate a convention preventing the "weaponization" of outer space.
- Such a convention would ban all actual weapons orbiting the earth or otherwise stationed in outer space, going beyond the ban of weapons of mass destruction secured in the 1967 Outer Space Treaty.

Q. Are space-based weapon systems envisioned to be part of the system?

Suggested Reply

- The missile defence system proposed under the Clinton Administration did not envisage "weapons" in space, although special radars were a part of the design.
- We have no information that would suggest that the Bush administration is considering basing weapons in space as a part of a missile defence system.
- The stationing of weapons of mass destruction in space is banned by the Outer Space Treaty of 1967. The ABM Treaty also puts limits on US and Russian activities in space.
- Canada does not oppose all military operations in space. Some, like remote sensing and search and rescue, can benefit international security.

RUSSIA AND CHINA

Q. Will Canada's position on missile defence depend on what Russia and China do?

Suggested Reply

- No. Canada will determine its position based on what is in Canada's best interest nationally and globally.
- Russia and China play important roles with respect to global efforts for nuclear disarmament and the maintenance of strategic stability.
- Their views need to be taken into consideration, but they will not determine the Canadian position on missile defence.
- Prime Minister Chrétien has discussed missile defence with both the leaders of Russia and China. He has underscored the importance of continuing discussions.

G-8

Q. Will Canada seek to counter US missile defence plans through the G8 summit process?

Suggested Reply

- Canada will seek to discuss US missile defence with the US, with our other allies, and with Russia and China in each appropriate forum.

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