



# Statements and Speeches

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## CANADA PREPARES FOR SECOND UN SPECIAL SESSION ON DISARMAMENT

Statement by the Honourable Mark MacGuigan, Secretary of State for External Affairs, to the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence, Ottawa, February 25, 1982

The Standing Committee's examination of "security and disarmament issues with special attention to Canada's participation in the second Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to Disarmament" [UNSSOD II] is directed to a priority of Canadian foreign policy. I should like to express my appreciation for the concentrated series of hearings which the Committee has undertaken.

Canada's security policy has three complementary thrusts. They are: (1) deterrence of war through the collective security arrangements of NATO [the North Atlantic Treaty Organization] and NORAD [the North American Aerospace Defence Command]; (2) active co-operation in efforts to achieve equitable and verifiable arms control and disarmament agreements; (3) support for peaceful settlement of disputes and the collective effort for peaceful settlement of disputes and the collective effort to resolve the underlying economic and social causes of international tensions. Since I have elaborated on this last point on a number of occasions, I shall not do so today.

Canada recognizes the need for collective efforts to deter aggression against the North American and European regions of the North Atlantic alliance. It supports and contributes to this defence effort. We are members of an alliance which relies on a deterrent strategy in which nuclear weapons play an important part. This is unavoidable in the world as we know it. The NATO strategy of flexible response and forward defence depends on our being ready and able to respond to aggression at whatever level is necessary to counter it. The nuclear weapons of the United States and other NATO allies make an essential contribution to the security of Canada and of the alliance as a whole. While the United States provides the principal strategic deterrent, nuclear weapons of the United Kingdom are committed to the defence of NATO, and France's independent force also serves to reinforce deterrence in Europe.

We now face approximate parity at the strategic nuclear level between the Soviet Union and the United States, Soviet superiority in intermediate range nuclear weapons in Europe and the numerical superiority of the Warsaw Pact in conventional land forces. In these circumstances, members of the alliance have felt it necessary to take steps to prevent their capacity to deter aggression and to defend themselves from being further eroded. These efforts must be seen against the background of the qualitative and quantitative growth in the military power of the Soviet Union in recent years and in its disposition to project that power in support of its political

Moratorium  
proposals  
rejected

**Strategic arms  
limitation**

goals. Canada supports the NATO decision on intermediate range nuclear forces. We are convinced that failure to make adjustments in these areas could dangerously weaken the collective security of the alliance, of which we are a part, and seriously undermine the prospects for productive negotiations with the U.S.S.R. on limitations on such forces. For this reason we do not accept proposals for a moratorium or freeze which would perpetuate the present imbalance of these forces.

I come now to the question of negotiations on limiting strategic arms which have become increasingly important as a means of enhancing the stability of the mutual balance of deterrence. The process, begun in 1969, was suspended in the aftermath of the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan. It is still indispensable that the two major nuclear powers renew their efforts to establish both quantitative and qualitative limits on their strategic nuclear forces as well as pursuing the more ambitious goal of mutual reductions in nuclear arsenals.

Some months ago the United States announced its readiness to resume talks on strategic arms early this year. It is regrettable that, because of the deterioration in the international situation caused by rigours of martial law in Poland, a date for the resumption has not yet been fixed. Unless the Polish situation continues to deteriorate, I do not consider that it should be the cause for an unduly long delay in resuming talks on strategic arms. The United States has indicated that it intends to emphasize reductions. Canada supports this objective and looks for a similar statement of intent from the Soviet Union.

The nuclear arms control process should include not only intercontinental nuclear weapons. It should also cover nuclear weapons stationed in Europe, starting with intermediate range land-based nuclear missiles — that is, with missiles based in the Soviet Union that can reach Western Europe, and missiles based in Western Europe that can reach the Soviet Union. Canada is a strong supporter of the bilateral U.S.A./U.S.S.R. talks on intermediate range nuclear forces which were proposed by NATO nations in December 1979 and which began in Geneva last November.

Canada has also sought to discourage the spread of nuclear weapons to countries that do not have them. Such a development would have profoundly destabilizing effects on international security. Although we have long had the capability to do so, we have chosen not to develop nuclear weapons of our own. We have chosen also to seek roles for our own forces within the collective defence context which are not nuclear. We shall no longer require or have access to any nuclear weapons for use by the Canadian Forces as soon as the *CF-101* interceptor is replaced with the *CF-18A*. Canada has striven to strengthen the international non-proliferation system. We have done so even though our insistence on adequate safeguards and undertakings as a condition for the export of Canadian nuclear and special material, equipment, facilities and technology has entailed commercial disadvantages for us.

**Security the key**

At this point I want to make it clear that our support for the maintenance of forces sufficient to deter aggression and defend the NATO area is entirely consistent with our commitment to a vigorous arms control and disarmament policy. Indeed, the two policies are more than consistent; they complement and support each other, forming a coherent whole. They serve the same goal of enhancing security and preserving peace. Security is the key. For only on a basis of undiminished security can nations be expected to accept limitations on the numbers and quality of their weapons. And only on such a basis can they be brought to consider mutual and balanced reductions of their armed forces.

It is against this background of a balanced security policy that Canadian interests and efforts in disarmament at UNSSOD II should be viewed. It was against such a background that the Prime Minister proposed, at the first Special Session on Disarmament in 1978, a strategy of suffocation which called for the negotiation of verifiable agreements by the nuclear powers on its four elements. The proposal addressed the problem of vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons. The problem remains, as does the validity of the concept.

I have thus far talked about nuclear issues which are among the priorities of Canadian arms control and disarmament policy, which I set out in 1980. I want now to turn to another priority: a ban on chemical weapons.

**Chemical weapons**

The Committee on Disarmament, the multilateral negotiating body in Geneva, has given increased attention to this subject in the past two years by establishing a working group on chemical weapons. It is mainly in this forum that Canada has and will continue to contribute its technical expertise. As a result of continuing Canadian research on defensive measures, we have the knowledge which enables us to offer meaningful suggestions on such aspects as the verification provisions of an eventual treaty banning these weapons. The fact that Canadian soldiers without protective equipment were the first to suffer a massive gas attack in the First World War has undoubtedly contributed to Canadian preoccupation with defensive measures. The subject of chemical weapons illustrates well the way in which the two elements of security policy overlap. Allegations of use of chemical weapons in recent years mean that the subject of chemical weapons is likely to receive considerable attention at UNSSOD II. Canada co-sponsored a resolution in the General Assembly in 1980 which led to the establishment of a group of experts to investigate reports of use and subsequently provided to the UN Secretary-General information on alleged use of chemical weapons volunteered by refugees in Thailand.

**Conventional forces**

Turning to conventional forces, I am sure that it will come as no surprise that their limitation is a Canadian priority. These forces account for a high proportion — estimated at 80 per cent — of military expenditures. We continue to seek mutual and balanced reductions in the conventional forces of NATO and the Warsaw Pact confronting each other in the region of central Europe. We also seek agreement on

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measures, such as the notification of military manoeuvres, designed to increase confidence between the two military alliances in Europe about each other's intentions. In the United Nations we participated in the recently concluded study on confidence-building measures. We have also supported efforts in the United Nations to limit the transfer of conventional weapons and to find ways of reducing military budgets. On both we are continuing to press for greater openness. I have approved moves to explore how Canada can publish more information on Canadian military sales to show more explicitly the Canadian record of a restrictive and sensitive policy in this area. Finally, Canada has vigorously supported the initiation of a UN study on conventional disarmament.

All of the subjects I have mentioned so far were considered at the first Special Session and will form part of the deliberations at UNSSOD II.

In preparing for UNSSOD II, it is appropriate to ask how Canada can best contribute towards the realization of arms control and disarmament agreements. Although agreements are not going to be negotiated at UNSSOD II, ways of promoting their realization will be a major preoccupation.

**Importance of verification**

From the earliest deliberations on disarmament after the Second World War, a consistent Canadian theme has been the importance of ensuring that terms of any agreement are being observed. Canada has also sought to encourage, where useful and possible, the involvement of the international community in witnessing compliance. That is what is meant by the term international verification. Concern about verification is even more important today with the growing complexity of weapons systems and the declining degree of international confidence. When compliance is called in question and verification provisions are inadequate, the whole process of arms control and disarmament becomes more difficult, not least as a result of the inevitable decline in confidence. I therefore become impatient with those who argue that concern for verification is little more than an obstructionist tactic or that taking an interest in verification is "playing the American game". The government is serious about arms control and disarmament as an instrument of security policy, and we will continue to emphasize the importance of verification, as the Prime Minister did at UNSSOD I, as the Speech from the Throne did two years ago and, I might add, as did the Final Document of UNSSOD I.

**Canada's role**

By stressing the practical aspects of verification and applying expertise in other areas to arms control and disarmament issues, Canada has been able to play a role in the past and can continue to make a contribution in the future. Canada's non-proliferation and safeguards policy makes us a world leader in this important aspect of promoting the evolution of an effective non-proliferation régime, a priority of Canadian policy on arms control and disarmament.

Another example in which Canada has been involved for some years is the work on an

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international seismic data exchange. In working towards the objective of a comprehensive test ban I hope that the exchange can be implemented at an early date and that Canada will be a full participant from the beginning.

You have also heard about the contributions Canada has made on the difficult issues surrounding the verification of a ban on chemical weapons.

There is another subject on which Canadian expertise could be applied: arms control and outer space. Canada played an important role in the negotiations leading to the Outer Space Treaty of 1967. We have a continuing interest in developments on this issue because of our geographic location and our extensive involvement in communications satellites. The subject of arms control and outer space is now before the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva and I hope that Canada can assist in reaching a verifiable agreement in that body.

While problems of verification vary according to weapons system, there is an enormous need for increased understanding of the importance of arms control and disarmament agreements being verifiable and of the growing costs of verification. It is for this reason that Canadian research, intended originally for Canadian use, has been made available in a series of papers during the past two years to the multilateral negotiating body in Geneva. It is also the reason why the government has continued to follow closely the proposal for an international satellite monitoring agency, put forward by France at the time of UNSSOD I. Its purpose would be to monitor compliance with the provisions of arms control and disarmament agreements. Although tremendously costly, it could be a significant step in the development of international verification mechanisms. Our support in principle is tempered by the recognition that the co-operation and involvement of the two superpowers, which now have such a capability, would be a prerequisite for the successful implementation of the proposal. Since it would be designed for monitoring multilateral agreements, it could be argued that the proposal should be closely related to the successful negotiation of further agreements.

**Disarmament  
and develop-  
ment**

I want now to turn to the question of the relationship between disarmament and development — a subject you have been covering and on which Canadian expertise exists. This relationship has been the subject of the most ambitious of the several UN disarmament studies since UNSSOD I and will figure prominently at UNSSOD II. Because disarmament and development are both priorities of Canadian foreign policy, it would be appropriate to examine ways, including technical assistance in areas of Canadian expertise, such as seismology and protective measures against chemical warfare, in which both objectives may be furthered. Perhaps research in development could be broadened in some instances to promote both disarmament and development.

Research and public information activities form a relatively new part of Canadian

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policy on arms control and disarmament. In my statement on the occasion of Disarmament Week last October, I outlined various steps which my department has been taking to encourage research and public information activities in Canada on arms control and disarmament issues. It is my hope that additional funds can be made available to assist the increasing efforts being made by institutions, organizations and individuals across the country. The Department of National Defence, the Canadian International Development Agency, the Department of the Secretary of State, and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council have also contributed to the government's efforts to implement the recommendations on research and information in the Final Document of UNSSOD I.

Among the benefits of increased research and public information activities can be a greater awareness of the place of arms control and disarmament agreements as a means toward the much broader end of a more stable and secure world. I recall the public pessimism two years ago following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. There was a disturbing tendency to denigrate the achievements in arms control and disarmament, to assume the process had come to a halt, and to talk about war as imminent or inevitable. In one of my first speeches as Secretary of State for External Affairs I rejected such analyses. Those self-defeating views have been coming to the fore again in recent months and sometimes become translated into calls for unilateral disarmament. Let me say now, as I said on that same occasion two years ago, disarmament must be by agreement; it must not be unilateral. The negotiation of arms control and disarmament agreements, I concluded, is a security imperative for the Eighties. That is why UNSSOD II is important for Canada.

I wish to conclude my statement by saying that I look forward positively to the second Special Session on Disarmament. There is interest and support from a growing number of people in Canada. The hearings of this Committee have served well to bring to parliamentary and government attention a range of views and proposals. The Committee's report will be welcomed by the government in the formulation of Canadian positions to be taken at UNSSOD II.

The Canadian delegation to the first Special Session made a significant contribution to its success. The Final Document which was produced by consensus is remarkable in setting out a common declaration of principles, outlining a program of action and updating international machinery.

The international atmosphere since 1978 has not been propitious for the negotiation of arms control and disarmament agreements. But we have not stood still like a ring of Arctic musk-oxen when threatened. Canada has made genuine efforts to help resolve international disputes. We have been generous in providing food and homes for refugees. And we have made continuing efforts to further arms control and disarmament negotiations.

The Canadian delegation can and will take an active part in the work of the second Special Session. I am asking our Ambassador for Disarmament to visit Western Europe very shortly for two weeks of consultations. In Geneva he will meet not only with western representatives but also important eastern and non-aligned representatives. We have had official level talks with the Americans and I would remind the Committee that President Reagan made an important speech on disarmament last November 18.

As in 1978, I think that the Canadian delegation should strive, in co-operation with other delegations, to chart the way ahead and give a further impetus to arms control and disarmament negotiations. We should not be unrealistic in our expectations from a conference which is expected to take decisions by consensus.

Canada has a number of contributions to make. It has idealism and ideas. It has a role of liaison. It has leverage on horizontal non-proliferation. It has expertise in seismic detection and chemical-weapons verification. In these and other ways we can and will do our best to contribute to the success of UNSSOD II.

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