



# STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION  
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
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No. 63/20 URGENT NEED FOR SUSPENSION OF NUCLEAR AND THERMONUCLEAR TESTS

Statement by the Secretary of State for External Affairs of Canada, the Honourable Paul Martin, P.C., M.P., in the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly on October 18, 1963.

Mr. Chairmans:

It is a great pleasure for me again to have the opportunity of addressing the First Committee as the representative of Canada, and to meet colleagues with whom I worked in the past on the many difficult problems with which this Committee has been faced. None of these problems, as all of us know so well, is of greater import for the future of the world than the problem of disarmament - the problem of how we can make the transition from the arms race and the cold war to peace and security guaranteed to all under the aegis of this organization.

Canada has participated in the negotiations on disarmament since their beginning in the United Nations. It is a responsibility which, I can assure the Committee, we regard as of paramount importance.

For the first time since this item on the suspension of nuclear tests was inscribed we meet in a brightening atmosphere. We have been encouraged by the signature of the partial nuclear test ban treaty by the three great nuclear powers and by more than one hundred other states.

Tribute must be paid, first, to the three nuclear powers who have concluded the first significant treaty restricting the development of armaments since World War II; second, to the non-aligned members of the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Conference whose tireless efforts contributed greatly to this accord; and third, to all the other members of the United Nations which over the years have continually focussed international attention on the urgency and importance of ending all tests. We all have some reason to hope that the test-ban agreement of August 5 signifies, as the distinguished representative of Tunisia said in Plenary Session, "an irreversible trend towards disarmament and peace."

For many years the major powers have talked about disarmament, but many countries, including ourselves, have believed that these discussions would remain unrealistic so long as the nuclear powers were unable to take the first essential step of stopping the development of nuclear weapons. The limited test-ban is therefore of particular significance. It provides reassurance to the

world that fallout will not continue to endanger the health of this and future generations - that in itself is a gain of enormous human significance. It also shows that the major powers have taken a step towards ending the unrestricted development of even more destructive types of weapons. The object of disarmament is to reduce and then eliminate all major weapons, but it is important, first, to arrest completely the refinement of weapons which testing makes possible. This is why we regard the partial test-ban as a "break-through", heralding - we hope - further steps towards restricting competition in new types of armaments.

We welcome, therefore, the determination of the nuclear powers, as expressed in the preamble to the limited test-ban, to continue to seek agreement on stopping underground tests. Previous speakers in this Committee have quite rightly emphasized the importance of continued negotiations towards this end. The competition in and the development of new types of nuclear weapons cannot finally be ended until agreement on this matter is achieved.

We welcome the fact that other countries, great and small - now numbering over one hundred - and many with the potential to develop nuclear weapons, have signed the treaty, thereby signifying that they do not intend to develop nuclear weapons. The fact that several technically and economically-advanced countries have taken this step is of special significance in limiting quantitatively the proliferation of these weapons. In this connection, it should be noted that the Federal Republic of Germany, in signing the partial test-ban, has provided further evidence of its intention to adhere to its policy of refraining from manufacturing nuclear weapons. On September 25, in Plenary Session, the distinguished Foreign Minister of Denmark refuted the unjustified allegations which continue to be made against the Federal Republic of Germany. We subscribe to his remarks.

I am glad to place on record our assurance that Canada has no intention of departing from its established policy of refraining from conducting such weapons tests in any environment. We hope that others in a similar situation will also maintain their present policies. Canada is one of the countries that have the technical and industrial capacity to manufacture nuclear weapons. Many years ago we renounced any intention to do so, and we have never deviated from that policy. In the United Nations and in the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Conference, Canada has been in the forefront of countries seeking an agreement to end all nuclear tests, and we were, for this reason, one of the first to sign the test-ban agreement of August 5.

We welcome the resolution prohibiting the orbiting of weapons of mass destruction in outer space. Canada has for some time been urging agreement in this field. In the Eighteen-Nation Conference, on March 27, 1962, two weeks after its inception, Canada proposed a declaration on this subject. The resolution banning weapons in outer space is welcomed by the world for several reasons: first, like the limited test-ban treaty, it will help to put a brake on the development and refinement of new weapons; second, the resolution is not confined to the prohibition of orbiting nuclear weapons but includes other types of mass destruction weapons as well; finally, it demonstrates the fact that in the new horizons of man's activity opened by science, the major powers are hereby giving further proof of their intention to confine their activities to peaceful ends.

We hope also that all countries will become parties to the limited test-ban. Canada has noted the proposal of Peking of July 31 for a conference of heads of governments of all countries to discuss the total prohibition and destruction of nuclear weapons. We welcome this evidence of Peking's interest in the elimination of nuclear arms and we hope this will lead them to the conclusion that universal acceptance of the partial test-ban agreement would be an important first step in that direction. We hope that Peking will come to share the view that the question of nuclear disarmament, while a most important feature of a disarmament agreement, cannot be considered in isolation from the elimination of other types of weapons and the reduction of armed forces. The distinguished representative of India, Madame Pandit, explained in this Committee just a few days ago why this is so. The Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Conference is now engaged in the task of working out a balanced disarmament agreement designed to have world-wide application. It is realized that a treaty on general and complete disarmament must embrace all nations - or at least all major military nations. We hope that Peking will eventually support the important efforts now being made to develop a programme for disarmament and will appreciate that to call a world conference of heads of governments to consider disarmament is, at this stage, premature.

Canada will strongly endorse and support a draft resolution calling on the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Conference to continue efforts to reach agreement on underground tests. We hope that the Disarmament Committee will soon reconvene in Geneva to resume its important work both in this field and in respect of collateral or preliminary measures and general and complete disarmament.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask your indulgence and that of the Committee to make a few general remarks on the subject of disarmament and measures preliminary to it. I regret that I will not be able to participate in the work of this Committee when it discusses the item on general disarmament. I therefore would like to take this opportunity to stress how important it is for the General Assembly to consider how we can best help to maintain this new momentum and achieve new significant agreements.

In the opinion of the Canadian Government, the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Conference is the most effective forum for disarmament negotiations yet established and deserves strong support from all United Nations members. It would be wrong to underestimate the role of the Geneva Conference - both past and future - in helping to reach agreements among the major powers. In the case of the accords on the partial test-ban and the direct communications link, it is significant that proposals on these subjects similar to the agreements adopted have been considered in the Eighteen-Nation Committee well in advance of the time when the agreements were reached. The same is true with regard to prohibition of orbiting weapons of mass destruction in outer space, which appeared as an item on the Conference's list of collateral measures. This shows, in our view, the special value of the Eighteen-Nation Committee as a forum in which the two main sides, and all the other participants as well, can submit their ideas, allow them to be considered, studied and developed so as to provide a basis for agreement when the time becomes ripe for an accord to be adopted. The reaction of the members of the Eighteen-Nation Conference has also been of assistance to

the major powers in developing their proposals for a total disarmament programme. The constructive contributions of the eight non-aligned countries greatly facilitated these achievements.

Even though final accords may be reached outside the confines of the Eighteen-Nation Committee, as in the case of the partial test-ban treaty and the agreement on orbiting weapons, that is no reflection on the work or worth of the Committee, for it is the end result which counts, not the forum in which that result is reached, and it is only to be expected that in nuclear matters it is the nuclear powers who must finally agree.

The Eighteen-Nation Committee will be reconvening in circumstances which can make its work fruitful far beyond the general expectation of only some months ago. All of us at this session of the United Nations have been struck by the atmosphere of harmony and cooperation that has characterized our discussions so far in the nuclear tests and disarmament field. All of us have been struck also by relative harmony which is reported to have prevailed during the talks here of the Foreign Ministers of the United States, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union. This new spirit presents the Geneva Conference with a unique opportunity to find new areas of agreement on measures to reduce international tensions. It also places on the Conference the responsibility to seize the opportunities presented by the atmosphere of détente in order to reach agreements involving physical measures of disarmament.

To what measure should the Eighteen-Nation Conference give priority? We suggest measures to reduce the risk of surprise attack, such as the establishment of ground observation posts; measures to control the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons; as the Foreign Minister of Ireland suggested; actual physical measures of disarmament, as Lord Home proposed, and continued negotiation towards a comprehensive test-ban agreement. We must continue to proceed step by step, building up that degree of confidence which will enable far-reaching measures of disarmament to be implemented. Although progress has been slow in the Eighteen-Nation Conference, it would be wrong to be discouraged. As in the case of the limited test-ban, and the Austrian State Treaty, a seemingly endless and inconclusive discussion can lead, suddenly, to progress and achievement. We now have the prerequisite for successful negotiations - a world-wide conviction that security cannot be enhanced by the arms race and that countries with different political philosophies share an overriding common interest - that of promoting and achieving world stability through the control and elimination of armaments and the settlement of disputes by peaceful means.

The Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, Mr. Gromyko, in his statement in Plenary Session on September 19, suggested that the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament should convene early next year at the level of heads of government or state. I should like to quote the remarks of the Prime Minister of Canada, the Right Honourable Lester Pearson, concerning this proposal. On September 25, the Prime Minister said that, "I have always felt that while there are occasions when summit meetings are essential you should be very careful to do all the preparation in the valley before you try to get up to the summit for your meeting. In other words, a summit conference is attended with so much publicity and arouses so much in the way of expectation that you should be pretty

sure that you are going to be able to accomplish anything before you have one; otherwise the resulting disillusionment is pretty great. So, if we are going to have a summit disarmament meeting of the Committee of Eighteen, then there would have to be a lot of preparation done in advance and we would have to be pretty certain that the summit meeting was going to result in some concrete achievement. On those conditions I would be very glad to attend it".

If, as we hope, the major powers of the world move forward towards ending the arms race and dependence on national armaments for the maintenance of their security, the more urgent becomes the need to develop the capacity of the United Nations to deal with situations which could threaten international peace. Both the joint statement of agreed principles and the United States and the Soviet Union's disarmament plans recognize the need for improved peacekeeping machinery as disarmament progresses. Prime Minister Pearson, in Plenary Session on September 19, indicated the steps Canada has already taken, in our national military planning, to maintain, train and equip units which can be placed at the disposal of the United Nations on short notice for service anywhere in the world. The Prime Minister of Canada urged others to adopt similar arrangements and he proposed that there should be an examination by interested governments of the problems and techniques of peacekeeping operations with a view to the development in a coordinated way of trained and equipped collective forces for United Nations service. At a later stage we intend to follow up with concrete proposals to this end. The Canadian Prime Minister was not, as some seemed to have thought, advocating a standing United Nations army at this time but rather the more modest objective of coordinated national preparations to meet the sort of United Nations requests a number of us have already repeatedly been called upon to fulfil.

Mr. Chairman, while general and complete disarmament must remain our objective over the long term, we can and should give just as great attention at this stage to working out preliminary agreements designed to facilitate progress towards that objective. Clearly, the United Nations General Assembly is not itself an appropriate forum for examining detailed proposals either on disarmament or on measures designed to facilitate disarmament. At the same time we believe it is of the utmost importance that such detailed studies should be carried out by a body which is representative of world opinion. We believe that the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee comes closer to this requirement than any other body established for the purpose. The major military powers are, for the most part, represented on the Committee. I might add, in this connection, that the successful prosecution of the tasks of the Conference requires active participation of all of its members, particularly in relation to the key problem of nuclear disarmament. We feel strongly that this Assembly should reaffirm its confidence in the Committee's ability to pursue its task.

Mr. Chairman, this Assembly has every right to be encouraged by the agreements which have been reached within the last half year on measures which can reduce tension and facilitate the way to general disarmament. While this progress is welcome we should not let it be a cause for relaxing our efforts. It is a sobering thought at this time that as yet not a single rocket, not a bomber, not an atomic bomb, not a thermo-nuclear warhead, not even a machinegun, has been put on the scrapheap as a result of agreement to disarm.

I do not need to remind a body of this distinction of the close connection between the arms race and international political problems. States arm themselves to defend national interests which they believe are threatened by other states. When one state arms, another responds. The competition in arms building in turn intensifies political disputes. The two processes become completely intertwined. When this happens, it requires statesmanship of the highest order to reverse the trend and to disentangle the arms race from the political confrontation.

It is important that we all have a clear understanding of the nature of the detente about which so much is now spoken. The political problems have not been solved. The détente means only that the leaders of the Atlantic alliance and of the Soviet bloc have recognized that there can be no hope of arresting the arms race and liberating man from the danger of self-destruction unless a climate is created in which political differences can be rationally and unemotionally examined.

In so far as disarmament is concerned, for the first time there is a realization on both sides that it is a gradual process. The agreements recently reached have been made possible because the great powers have recognized that in certain small but well-defined areas they had an identity of interest. They have had the realism to give tangible expression to that identity of interest. This is welcome evidence of a new approach. These steps are desirable in themselves. Moreover, the very process of reaching agreement diminishes the enormous reservoir of suspicion built up over recent years, and thereby makes possible the further steps needed to attain the final goal.

Mr. Chairman, the Canadian Government is convinced that the nations of the world must continue to make an all-out effort to achieve a realistic programme of disarmament. As we see it, this is not just a question of the hopes or dreams of idealists; it is an objective which all rational men must recognize as in their own interest. The alternative of a continuing arms race is ruinously wasteful in terms of economic resources. It is also self-defeating because lasting peace never has been guaranteed by national armed force - and never can be; peace must be founded on effective international agreements for the reduction of armaments and the strengthening of machinery - and the political will to use it - for settling disputes by peaceful means. Canada, for its part, will continue to pursue the goal of disarmament under conditions of security.