



# Statements and Speeches

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## DISARMAMENT A MEANS TO INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND STABILITY

A Statement by Canadian Ambassador for Disarmament Arthur Menzies to the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly XXXVI, New York, October 28, 1981

Many of us here have just completed a fortnight's work on the agenda for the second Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Some of the deliberations of the First Committee at the present session can make an important substantive contribution to the preparations for that Special Session, which is to be held next June and July.

The Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Mark MacGuigan, in his address to the General Assembly on September 21, emphasized that "international peace and security, as well as development, freedom and life itself, will ultimately depend on whether we can successfully work towards arms control and disarmament". The second Special Session therefore must point the way to more concrete progress in this field.

Disarmament is not an end in itself, but a means to an end — that of international security and stability. Present international conditions do not suggest that we can take international stability and security for granted. In its turn, prospects for stability and security at the regional level, in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia and in Central America — or in other areas of this troubled planet — have effects far beyond the regions themselves. Conversely, and at the same time, successful efforts to create stability in one region positively affect other regions outside it. Prime Minister Trudeau recently pointed out that economic problems and international disputes have increased in both number and severity. While the super powers have grown stronger, they often seem to have lost control over events. Though political and economic instability may be most visible in the Third World, they are also painfully evident across the entire spectrum of international relations. The problems of East-West and North-South relations, energy, nuclear proliferation, the environment, refugees and sporadic outbursts of violence and war all form a complex of cause and effect.

**Committee  
work of "crucial  
importance"**

Within this context, in the words of the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs, our work leading up to the second Special Session on Disarmament could be of "crucial importance". We should build on the remarkable consensus reached in 1978. We should be governed by the considerations that led to that consensus and should strive to achieve the highest level of agreement on ways to move ahead on disarmament. Here, I refer to the Commonwealth heads of government declaration, issued in Melbourne early this month. These heads of government saw as a particularly serious matter mounting tension and lack of confidence among states. They saw that practical measures directed towards nuclear disarmament and the avoidance of all armed conflict, particularly nuclear conflict, must have the highest priority on the international agenda. Such goals can only be sought through restraint and a

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recognition that change, as an essential part of the dynamic of interdependence, is both inevitable and essential.

**SALT process**

A precondition for moving ahead at the second Special Session is the resumption of arms-limitation talks between the United States and the Soviet Union. Their recent decision, as announced in the General Assembly, to begin talks next month on theatre nuclear forces in Europe should give a positive impulse to our work. We look forward to those talks leading to a treaty which would restore the balance at the lowest possible level.

Canada therefore warmly welcomes the statement made here last week by the director of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Eugene Rostow, that the United States will be ready to resume negotiations on strategic arms early in 1982. We are particularly encouraged by the emphasis being placed on reductions and on the need for co-operation in ensuring mutual confidence. We look for an equally positive attitude on the part of the Soviet Union. In a number of statements, my Prime Minister has attached the highest priority to the resumption of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) process. It is to us of paramount importance that these critical negotiations, once resumed, move forward with the objective not just of limiting, but of reducing, these forces.

It is our view, moreover, that one of the most important factors governing the prospects for success at this year's deliberations, and at the Second Special session itself, will be the degree to which the atmosphere generated by these talks, even in their anticipation, will contribute to creating an atmosphere of international confidence.

We believe that the international concern expressed about the nuclear arms race would be incomplete if the dangers of further horizontal proliferation were not given sufficient weight. The implications of the nuclear dimension for regional tensions recently took concrete shape in the Middle East. With this as an example, and with the prospect of further regional proliferation still a matter that cannot be easily dismissed, we are convinced that greater efforts must be directed towards strengthening the international non-proliferation régime and the international instruments which support it. In this regard, we warmly welcome the ratification by Egypt of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, announced earlier this year.

**Verification procedures**

Canada believes that there is no substitute for the painstaking negotiation of verifiable agreements on arms limitation and disarmament. I would underline the word "verifiable". Verification is not a tactic to delay or prevent success in negotiations. More than ever before it is a prerequisite for their success. Canada has for many years sought the development of international verification procedures wherever these are required to supplement national mechanisms in order to enhance confidence that the parties are complying with the terms of agreements. Yet even in this body and elsewhere, ingrained habits of confrontation continue to persist — the hortatory over the practical, the seeking of the propaganda advantage and in some instances, the launching of proposals patently devoid of any hope of realization. We regard verification as one of the most important tests of the seriousness of a proposal. Verification

deals with facts, not with arguments, and for this reason is impartial. And impartiality is essential to building a climate of confidence.

The international community has used the United Nations to serve as witness to compliance with the provisions of a variety of agreements. In this connection, I should like to recall that next week will mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the momentous resolution of the General Assembly calling upon the Secretary-General to establish the United Nations Emergency Force in the Middle East to witness the cease-fire and withdrawal of forces. It seems to me, there is an appropriate analogy to be drawn between United Nations peace-keeping and what we hope will be an increasing role of the United Nations in serving as witness to compliance by parties to arms-limitation and disarmament agreements.

It has long been accepted that there is an international role in the verification of a nuclear test-ban treaty: co-operative seismic monitoring measures which have been under consideration by the *Ad Hoc* Group of Seismic Experts in Geneva. As we have said in the Committee on Disarmament, we believe that that Committee and the Seismic Experts Group can supplement in a very practical manner the efforts of the negotiating states and the national verification provisions.

Essential elements

The realization of a verifiable nuclear test-ban treaty is one of the four elements of the strategy of suffocation proposed by Prime Minister Trudeau at the first United Nations Special Session on Disarmament. I should like to recall that, in addition to a comprehensive test ban, he envisaged verifiable agreements, (a) banning the flight-testing of all new strategic delivery vehicles; (b) banning the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes and, (c) limiting and progressively reducing military spending on new strategic nuclear weapon systems. Conclusion of agreements on these four elements in combination would go a long way towards preventing both vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. We recognize that much progress must be made in negotiations on nuclear forces between the Soviet Union and the United States before agreements can be realized on all four elements.

Nuclear weapons are not the only threat to international peace and security. The final document of the Special Session listed conventional forces among the priorities. We cannot ignore the vast array of conventional weapons to which 80 per cent of arms expenditures is directed. Canada is ready to participate in any serious effort to control conventional arms. In this regard, we hope that the study on conventional disarmament will be approved during the present session of the General Assembly by consensus, without resort to formal voting.

Chemical and toxin weapons

There has been progress recently on working towards the prohibition of chemical weapons, another high priority of Canada, which has continued to contribute the expertise it has gained from its research on defensive measures, means of destruction and verification. We are now working in co-operation with others to develop a draft resolution which will express the Assembly's desire to see progress quickened in the Committee on Disarmament towards such an agreement.

A closely related issue is that of the reports of the use of chemical weapons and, more

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recently, of toxin weapons. It appears to us that the investigation launched by the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly has not yet fulfilled its mandate, both because the Exports Group has only recently been given permission to go to countries in the area in question to collect evidence and because recent reports of the possible use of toxins must be given serious study. We would therefore urge other delegations that wish to see the effectiveness of existing agreements maintained to join in extending the mandate of the Experts Group.

Of the several studies which will be presented to this session of the General Assembly, we have nominated experts to take part in those on confidence-building measures and on the relationship between disarmament and development. I have referred earlier to the necessity to build and maintain confidence as an essential ingredient of the process of negotiation. The study on confidence-building measures will be a valuable reminder that the measures and factors which it analyzes can and should be used to assist in the negotiation and implementation of agreements.

With regard to the disarmament and development study, I share the hope expressed by Sweden's distinguished Under-Secretary of State for Disarmament, Mrs. Inga Thorsson, that this project will represent the beginning of a process. A Canadian expert participated in that study, with which we are proud to have been associated. It underlines the interrelatedness of the problems which confront the world community and the need, more than ever before, for breadth of vision for their resolution.

A year ago I drew attention to the incipient arms competition in outer space and called for intensified efforts to conclude further measures to prevent an arms race in outer space. Canada has been involved for over 20 years in the peaceful use of outer space. Eight Canadian-built satellites are at present serving in the communications field. We hope to use the experience we have gained in these peaceful activities to assist in reaching an agreement to maintain outer space as a weapon-free environment. Negotiations towards such an agreement should be carried out in the Committee on Disarmament.

**Public involve-  
ment**

I began by referring to the preparations for the second Special Session. In concluding, I should like to mention that in Canada, parliamentarians, community groups, non-governmental organizations, universities, secondary schools and individuals are involved in the study of issues likely to arise at the Special Session. In the years since the first Special Session the Canadian government has greatly increased its efforts to assist the process of public involvement. Financial support has been provided for international conferences held in Canada as well as for seminars, study groups and speakers at a variety of meetings during this Disarmament Week. We have attached particular importance to research being undertaken from a Canadian perspective. We have also been issuing a newsletter on national and international activities in the field of disarmament.

In his statement in plenary, the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs said: "we cannot ignore the growing impatience of the world's peoples with the lack of progress towards verifiable arms limitation and disarmament agreements. Our efforts

on their behalf should take into account the situation as it is in covering realistic proposals which have some substantive chance to effect change". In present-day circumstances, it is imperative that we not be diverted from this task.

Canada is ready to work towards progress where progress is possible. We should emphasize the practical over the theoretical and resist polemics. We should not become so fascinated with tactics, either now or at the Special Session next year, that opportunities for progress will be missed. No procedural victory, no recourse to divisive vote will substitute for realism and restraint and the search for the possible.

There is one final consideration: the ability of the United Nations to deal with the critical matters of arms control and international security. Ultimately, the success this institution achieves in real arms control is a test of the credibility of this organization in these demanding times.

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