



Statements and Speeches

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INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND DISARMAMENT

A Statement by Ambassador for Disarmament A.R. Menzies, to the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence, Ottawa, February 3, 1982

Questions of security and disarmament are much in the minds of people the world over in these troubled times. Leaders of government and their officials, non-governmental organizations and ordinary citizens grapple with the vexing question of how best to build a better and more secure future in face of the serious threats to the peace that prevails.

The carnage of 1914-18 was said to be the war to end all wars. Twenty years later the world was plunged into darkness again. More than 100 wars have been fought in the developing countries since the Second World War, killing 25 million people and driving millions more into refugee camps. In Central Europe, about two million North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and Warsaw Pact troops armed with sophisticated conventional and nuclear weapons face each other. Additional risks are inherent in the spread of nuclear weapons technology to non-nuclear weapon states. Over \$500 billion was spent on armaments last year alone — money that is sorely needed for improved social welfare and economic development.

In the debate on foreign policy in the House last June, the Prime Minister began by saying that "our world has become unpredictable and unstable" and "more dangerous". He said that "there is a generalized condition of crisis expectation". He reminded the House that "all the great problems of the world are interrelated: the problems of East and West, North and South, of energy, nuclear proliferation, refugees, sporadic outbursts of violence and war — all of these form a complex of cause and effect".

A major cause of instability today is the strain in East-West relations, which has resulted in an erosion of that climate of confidence defined as *détente* in the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, signed by 35 heads of state or of government in Helsinki in 1975, of which Canada was a member. The Soviet arms build-up, the invasion of Afghanistan, the failure of the United States to ratify the SALT II Treaty [Strategic Arms Limitation Talks], and the excesses of martial law in Poland have all been contributory factors.

A significant source of instability lies in the irregularity of the cycle of armaments modernization in the major military powers. Prime Minister Trudeau spoke of this again in his speech in 1978 at the first Special Session. He said:

"What particularly concerns me is the technological impulse that continues to lie behind the development of strategic nuclear weaponry. It is after all, in the laboratories that the nuclear arms race begins. The new technologies can require a decade or more to take a weapons system from research and development to production and eventual deployment. What this means is that national policies are pre-empted for long periods ahead."

Since the first Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Disarmament in 1978, which I would like to refer to in future as UNSSOD I, there has been little progress in international disarmament negotiations. There is an urgent need for a new impetus to be given. UNSSOD II this year presents such an opportunity. Hearings in the standing committee, like other organized consultations elsewhere, provide the means by which citizens may express through their parliamentary representatives their concerns, their hopes and their practical suggestions for advancing the cause of arms control and disarmament.

Background

It is a sombre picture I have painted at the outset but it could have been worse. Europe, for example, has enjoyed a longer period of peace in the last three decades than in any other period this century; not because the expansionist ambitions of some have been quenched, nor alas because sufficient confidence has been built between East and West, but rather, because the strength and resolve of the North Atlantic alliance has deterred potential aggression.

After the enormous destruction of the Second World War, Canada, like many other countries, hoped for the creation of a new world order under the United Nations, through which peace and security would be assured by the Security Council, whose five permanent members were given veto powers.

The permanent members of the Security Council were unable to agree on ways to implement the provisions of the Charter relating to the maintenance of international peace and security. For this reason, and having regard to mounting tensions in Europe, Canada became one of the original signatories of the North Atlantic Treaty in 1949. The purpose of this regional collective security organization is to band together to deter potential aggression. Until the arrangements for maintaining international peace and security contained in the United Nations Charter are made effective, I assume that it will continue to be the policy of Canadian governments to rely on the regional collective security arrangements of NATO.

Vital though a credible deterrent is to the avoidance of war, it cannot by itself build a peace or resolve the underlying differences between East and West that are the root cause of the instability. Herein lies the great conundrum of security policy. On the one hand an effective deterrent is maintained by an adequate level of up-to-date armaments, and yet the cycle of armaments modernization breeds fear and mistrust which exacerbate instability. It has been my experience that it is impossible

to deal constructively with the complex questions of disarmament without taking fully into account the security imperatives of both sides. We want equal security at lower levels of armaments, manpower and expenditure.

Canada's security policy

Canadian security policy, as it has evolved since the Second World War, has been based on three foundations of peace:

- (a) the deterrence of war through the collective security arrangements of NATO and North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD);
- (b) the persistent search for equitable and verifiable arms control and disarmament agreements; and
- (c) active participation in and support for the peaceful settlement of disputes and a collective effort to resolve the underlying economic and social causes of international tensions and disputes.

Broadly speaking, Canada is confronted by the following types of disarmament problem:

- (a) the nuclear balance between the United States and the Soviet Union, including the interface with the other three nuclear weapon states;
- (b) the conventional forces balance in Central Europe between NATO and the Warsaw Pact;
- (c) conventional wars and confrontations in the developing countries too often fuelled by big power intervention; and
- (d) the risk of proliferation of nuclear weapons to additional countries.

I will comment briefly on Canada's interest in each of these types of arms control and disarmament problems.

Nuclear weapons

First, nuclear weapons: Canada is vitally interested in the nuclear-weapons confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union, not only because this country lies geographically between the Soviet Union and the United States, but also because, as a party to the NATO and NORAD agreements, Canada is a member of a nuclear-armed alliance, accepting its benefits and its responsibilities. Through a number of NATO committees Canada is informed about the United States' nuclear planning and has a full opportunity to contribute its views in the development of NATO nuclear policies. For instance, the Secretary of State for External Affairs and the Minister of National Defence joined other NATO ministers in the December 1979 decision to modernize NATO's land-based, intermediate-range nuclear forces in the European theatre and at the same time to propose negotiations with the Soviet Union on the limitation and reduction of these forces. This two-track decision has been reaffirmed by NATO foreign and defence ministers on repeated occasions since 1979, and both aspects are currently being pursued.

Negotiations on intermediate-range nuclear forces in Europe have begun in Geneva between the United States and the Soviet Union. The United States consults with its allies on its negotiating position in the NATO Special Consultative Group, of

which Canada is a member. After consultation in NATO, President Regan proposed last November that the United States would not deploy the *572 Pershing II* and *Cruise* missiles to Europe if the Soviet Union would remove and dismantle the *SS20*, *SS4* and *SS5* missiles it has aimed at Western Europe. This bold proposal was warmly welcomed by Western European governments and by Canada.

President Reagan said that the United States would be ready to resume talks on strategic arms this spring. He proposed to change the acronym from SALT, for strategic arms limitation talks, to START, for strategic arms reduction talks, indicating that he wanted a real reduction, not just a limitation or ceiling. When Secretary of State Alexander Haig met Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko in Geneva last week, it was initially intended that they set a date for the resumption of the SALT or START talks. However, because of the Polish situation, the United States was not prepared at this time to set a date for the commencement of the negotiations.

I think I have indicated Canada's acute interest in negotiations for the limitation and reduction of nuclear weapons by the United States and the Soviet Union. Canadian views are constantly being conveyed to the United States bilaterally and through NATO.

Conventional
forces in
Europe

Mutual and Balanced Force Resolutions (MBFR) — Because Canada has 5 000 armed forces personnel stationed in Central Europe, a Canadian delegation takes part in the talks on reduction of forces between NATO and the Warsaw Pact which have been going on in Vienna since 1973. I visited these talks in 1974, when I was Ambassador to NATO, and again last year. Unfortunately, although some progress has been made in the negotiations, no agreement has so far been possible because the Soviet Union has persistently maintained that the land forces of the two sides are equal, whereas the NATO nations are convinced that the Warsaw Pact has a superiority of about 150 000 men in the reduction area. Unless there is agreement on the basis data about existing force levels, it would be impossible to monitor compliance with any agreed reductions and residual ceilings.

The importance of these MBFR talks should not be underestimated for either alliance, as this military confrontation is said to soak up half of world military expenditures, or about \$250 billion a year. The MBRF negotiations are the only ongoing effort anywhere in the world to achieve actual reductions in forces in a region of military confrontation.

The Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), signed in Helsinki in June 1975, was intended to record the improvement of relations, or *détente*, in a variety of fields, from human contacts in trade to confidence-building measures for security.

From the hearings of a subcommittee of this standing committee in the summer and

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autumn of 1980, and its report of October 29, you will be aware that the second follow-up meeting of the CSCE has been taking place in Madrid since November 1980, endeavouring to reach agreement by consensus on a balanced report. One proposal being considered is the convening of a conference on disarmament in Europe which would focus initially on strengthened confidence-building measures. Unfortunately, East-West relations in Europe have not been good during the Madrid meeting and have deteriorated further recently because of the excesses of martial law in Poland. The meeting reconvenes February 9, that is next week, after its Christmas recess. I fear that the differences that will be underlined then will reflect on other negotiations on disarmament.

**Wars in
developing
countries**

The vast majority of the over 130 wars fought since 1945 have been in the developing countries, killing, as I mentioned earlier, 25 million people and creating enormous refugee problems. Canada is greatly concerned by the human suffering, the social and economic disruption and the frequent infringements of freedoms that so many wars in the developing countries have caused. The cost to Canada of helping to maintain refugees in camps, and settling substantial numbers in this country, has been considerable.... Canada also exercises strict control on the limited amount of military-related equipment it exports to developing countries to ensure that it does not go to areas of instability of military repression.

The Canadian record in United Nations' peacekeeping has been exemplary. With the increasing tendency for regional organizations like the Organization of African Unity or Organization of American States to deal with regional disputes as internal responsibilities, the question arises whether there is a further role that Canada could play in passing on its peacekeeping experience to other countries interested in peacekeeping on a regional basis.

**Risk of nuclear
weapons
proliferation**

As a producer and exporter of uranium, nuclear power equipment and technology, Canada is also concerned about the risks of additional countries' acquiring the capability to produce nuclear weapons.

The Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1968, to which Canada continues to give strong support, was aimed at stopping both vertical and horizontal proliferation: "vertical" meaning the increase in weapons held by the nuclear weapon state and "horizontal" meaning spreading out to other countries which do not now have them. Unfortunately, a number of near-nuclear states like India, Pakistan, Israel, South Africa, Brazil and Argentina have not signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the nuclear weapon states have failed to make any progress on their side of the bargain in reducing their stocks of nuclear weapons.

Now I should like to turn to institutional arrangements. Earlier in my statement I referred to Canada's hopes that the United Nations would develop effective arrangements to maintain international peace and security, including the principles governing

disarmament and the regulation of armaments as set out in Articles 11 and 26 of the Charter. Canada took an active part in the work of the UN Atomic Energy Commission set up in 1946. It was the first act of the then established General Assembly of the United Nations. It also took part in the work of the Committee on Conventional Armaments and all the succeeding commissions and committees that have been set up under the United Nations to deal with disarmament questions.

In 1978 at UNSSOD I, meaning the first United Nations Special Session, the present Committee on Disarmament was set up with 40 members. There was an enlargement progressively over the years and Canada is a member of that committee on disarmament, which has a majority of non-aligned states and all of the nuclear weapon states; France and China, for the first time in 1979 and 1980, I guess it was, joined the work. The committee and its working groups observed the consensus rule. That means that any one of the 40 countries can veto action by the committee.

The Committee on Disarmament (CD), has working groups on a chemical weapons treaty, a radiological weapons treaty, negative security assurances* and the drafting of a comprehensive program of disarmament. The Committee on Disarmament is too little known in Canada. Its work is not often reported in the Canadian media. In recent years its documents have not been as readily available to researchers as have those of the United Nations. Its future will be one of the subjects discussed at the Second Special Session. The committee must cope with the difficulties inherent in its sheer size. Its work is inevitably influenced by the degree of confidence between the two superpowers and the extent of progress in their bilateral negotiations.

First
Committee
work

Now I should like to refer to the work of the First Committee of the UN General Assembly. This is the main deliberative body on disarmament questions. Meeting for about two months each autumn, it passes resolutions by majority vote, which are not binding. Last year there were over 50 resolutions on disarmament matters. The debates and resolutions of the First Committee of the General Assembly are an important influence on international public and government opinion. My observation is that both Eastern and Western delegations make considerable effort to influence the 120 or more neutral and non-aligned delegations.

The General Assembly has also set up a Disarmament Commission composed of all member states which meets for about four weeks each spring to study in greater detail subjects referred to it by the Assembly.

In 1959 the General Assembly adopted general and complete disarmament as a basic goal of the United Nations. Both the Soviet Union and the United States submitted comprehensive proposals which were marked by a mixture of idealism and Cold War rhetoric. Although general and complete disarmament was retained as a lofty United Nations objective, it was increasingly recognized by East and West that such a goal could only be reached on a step-by-step basis and through the improvement of East-

* Negative security assurances involve the establishment of agreements whereby countries without nuclear capability would not be susceptible to nuclear attack.

West political confidence or *détente*.

Canada's role

Following the easing of the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, the debates in the First Committee began to focus on partial measures which could be more readily agreed and which would help to improve international confidence. Canada played an influential role in negotiations on five agreements:

- (a) the Partial Test Ban Treaty of 1963 barring tests in the atmosphere;
- (b) the Outer Space Treaty of 1967 prohibiting the orbiting of weapons of mass destruction;
- (c) the Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1968 which I have already mentioned;
- (d) the Seabed Treaty of 1971 barring the emplacement of nuclear weapons on the seabed; and
- (e) the convention of 1972 banning biological weapons.

The First United Nations Special Session on Disarmament was held in New York from May 23, 1978 to July 1, 1978. The final document, produced by consensus, marked the high point of international agreement on the objectives and principles that should guide the quest for disarmament. It set out a program of action on the disarmament measures that could be agreed and implemented. It revamped the disarmament machinery and made education and information proposals. This remarkable final document deserves careful study as your committee gives special attention to Canada's participation in the Second Special Session.

I do not have the time to give an account of the role of the Canadian delegation at UNSSOD I.... However, I do think I should mention the important speech made at UNSSOD I by Prime Minister Trudeau. That speech will have relevance for the positions to be taken by the Canadian delegation at the Second Special Session.

Mr. Trudeau spoke of the philosophy of disarmament, of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, of the need for restraint in the export of conventional military equipment, about peacekeeping and security. The part of his speech which attracted most attention dealt with the strategy of suffocation. He noted that the SALT talks have produced some useful quantitative limits indicating the possibility of confirming or codifying an existing balance of forces. But he also thought the SALT talks indicated the difficulty of cutting back on weapons systems once developed and deployed. It was difficult, he said, to achieve the magic formula of equal security by placing limits on what are often quite disparate weapons systems.

Hence, he proposed four interlocking measures which, if agreed, would arrest the dynamics of the nuclear arms race at the laboratory stage. These were:

- (a) a comprehensive test ban agreement;
- (b) an agreement to stop all new strategic delivery vehicles;
- (c) an agreement to prohibit all production of fissionable material for weapons purposes; and

Interlocking measures

(d) an agreement to limit and then progressively reduce military spending on new strategic-nuclear-weapon systems.

All these measures had been proposed before. What was new was the proposal that they be interlocking or mutually reinforcing. It should also be observed that Mr. Trudeau did not propose unilateral action but the negotiation of verifiable agreements.

When the strategy of suffocation was put forward, the conclusion of SALT II and a comprehensive test ban treaty appeared very likely. Unfortunately, although SALT II was signed in 1979. President Carter did not press the Senate to ratify it because of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December of 1979. The Comprehensive Test Ban trilateral negotiations were recessed in November 1980.

Since UNSSOD I the validity of the strategy of suffocation has been reaffirmed repeatedly, not least during the foreign policy debate in the House of Commons last June. In the less propitious international atmosphere today, special Canadian emphasis has been placed on the desirability of early resumption of the Soviet-American dialogue on the limitation and reduction of nuclear weapons. In the light of the resumption of that dialogue, it is hoped that the nuclear-weapon states will give further consideration to the elements of the strategy of suffocation as a means to control and arrest the production of new strategic systems.

**Need for
information**

In recent years there has been increased realization of the need for research and public information activities. Indeed, this is one of the major achievements of UNSSOD I. In the past three years the government has devoted much more attention to this aspect of policy. The creation of the position of Ambassador for Disarmament was part of that process, as has been the convening of a Consultative Group of Disarmament and Arms Control Affairs, the publication of the *Disarmament Bulletin* and the establishment of a modest disarmament fund to assist research publication and conferences.

The beneficial effects of this change have included a greater involvement of individuals outside of government in such ventures as UN disarmament studies, and a growing awareness in Canada of areas of Canadian expertise. In this connection, I am pleased that this committee will be examining the Canadian role and contribution in two technical areas. First there are the discussions within the CD aimed at the development of an international seismic data exchange system. This would be part of the international verification provisions of an eventual nuclear test ban treaty. Then there are the issues involved in negotiating a treaty to ban chemical weapons. Canadian expertise in defence against the use of chemical weapons has enabled Canada to make a widely respected contribution.

UNSSOD II will be meeting at a time of considerable international tension, heightened recently by the introduction of martial law in Poland. Lack of interna-

tional confidence inevitably will cast its shadow over the deliberations. While only four months remain before the opening, we can only hope that the collective will to make progress on arms control and disarmament at UNSSOD II will prevail over the current climate of mistrust. Certainly this is the spirit in which the government of Canada approaches this conference.

We have informed the Secretary-General of the United Nations that Canada hopes that the Special Session will give highest priority to:

- (a) promoting continuation of the SALT process;
- (b) conclusion of a multilateral comprehensive test ban treaty;
- (c) conclusion of an agreement on the prohibition of chemical weapons;
- (d) evolution of an effective non-proliferation regime, based on the Non-Proliferation Treaty; and
- (e) promotion of concrete measures to limit and reduce conventional forces.

Agenda for
UNSSOD II

The Preparatory Committee for UNSSOD II, on which I serve, has hammered out an agenda which includes a review of the present international situation as it affects implementation of UNSSOD I's program of action; a comprehensive program of disarmament which will restate that program of action; a review of disarmament machinery; new initiatives; and measures to mobilize world public opinion in favour of disarmament.

One may assume that, in the general debate, varying perceptions will be presented of the international situation and the reasons for lack of progress in implementing the program of action of UNSSOD I. Unless prior agreement is reached in the Committee on Disarmament of a comprehensive program of disarmament, and that must be done by consensus, prolonged debate on this item may be expected.

UNSSOD II will also consider several expert reports. The most important of these is probably the study on disarmament and development, to whose preparations Mr. Bernard Wood of the North-South Institute contributed. A popular version of this study by Clyde Sanger has been commissioned by the Department of External Affairs and should be published in March.

A study of the feasibility of a world disarmament campaign to increase research, education and public information about disarmament is to be discussed. Also, the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues, popularity known as the Palme Commission, should complete its report by the end of March....

Finally, our task at UNSSOD II will not be an easy one. The search for a more secure disarmed world, which is the longing of men of goodwill everywhere, is complex and arduous. That pursuit is made no easier in a climate of fear and mistrust. Negotiations for meaningful disarmament agreements can only succeed if the protagonists will allow them to do so, and if there are adequate assurances of undiminished security for all.

We must not, however, let impatience or frustration divert us from the course of such negotiations. You may detect in my words something of the oriental influence which contributed to my childhood in China. The Chinese philosopher/sage Confucius is reputed to have said, some 2 500 years ago, "The man of Virtue makes the difficulty to be overcome his first business, and success only a subsequent consideration."

Despite the enormous difficulties which lie in the way of effective disarmament agreements, I remain unshaken in my belief, after many years in this field, that Canada has played, and can continue to play, an important role in bringing about the successes we all strive for. We are not a nuclear-weapon state, but we are a partner in an alliance that encompasses a nuclear deterrence policy. We do not have large standing armed forces, nor do we bristle with armaments, but we play an integral part in making NATO and NORAD defences credible; and in both those capacities we have an opportunity to exercise influence on our great and powerful friends. Our technical expertise in vital areas such as verification procedures, so important to the negotiation of effective agreements, is recognized in the various international negotiating bodies.

We are not a superpower, but we are a respected voice in international councils. Our voice is made stronger when we join with like-minded countries, who share our resolve to tackle the difficulties and to conclude disarmament agreements that will work. Our way then is the high road of idealism – the same idealism that motivates all people who desire a disarmed world, but an idealism tempered by a pragmatism that recognizes that that world will only be brought about by painstaking and a serious negotiations.