



news release

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CANADA AGREES TO TEST CRUISE MISSILE

The Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, and the Minister of National Defence, the Honourable J. Gilles Lamontagne, announced today that Cabinet had agreed to the operational testing and evaluation of the unarmed AGM-86B air-launched cruise missile in Canada, following careful study of all considerations at issue.

The Government has undertaken an exhaustive technical assessment of the proposal received on 13 June. There are no safety, security or environmental difficulties or dangers in the proposed test program. There is little or no danger to Canadian life or property. The missile will be unarmed and will be under control at all times. No nuclear, biological or chemical warfare materials will be involved in the tests. The test project conforms to all stipulations of the Canada-USA Test and Evaluation Program concluded earlier this year.

This arrangement will remain in force for the initial five years of the Program, which can be terminated on one year's notice. The Government also has the right to cancel or suspend any specific project. Canadian legislation and regulations fully govern any activities under the Program.

Unique among Western allies, including the United States, Canada has the combination of high latitudes, space, terrain, cold weather and test facilities suitable for testing the unarmed air-launched cruise missile, and in particular its guidance system, over realistic distances. The test corridor is to be used during winter months only, and could involve four to six tests per year. The missile will be launched by a B-52 off the northern coast of Canada. It will proceed east of the Mackenzie River delta, and then parallel to the Rocky Mountains. It will turn eastward

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near Dawson Creek toward the Cold Lake Air Weapons Range straddling the Alberta-Saskatchewan border, where the flight will terminate.

The missile flight path, over parts of the Northwest Territories, British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan, will follow a route over largely uninhabited territory. Population centres will be avoided. Accompanying aircraft will take control should the missile stray from the established test corridor. Provincial and territorial authorities have been kept fully informed, and their safety concerns taken into account.

In concluding that the test project should proceed, Ministers gave particular attention to collective security requirements and current prospects for arms control. Ministers reviewed the full range of negotiations on strategic, intermediate and conventional arms, considered Canada's national interests and commitments, and assessed the possible deployment of Western weapons as a factor in promoting the resolution of outstanding arms control problems.

Two principles were agreed to be essential:

- (a) Canada's national security -- the security of our democratic values and our open society -- is indivisible from the security of others. We must now, as in the past, be in a position to exert our own distinctive influence on Western councils and commitments; and
- (b) Canada will never abandon the pursuit of global security at greatly reduced levels of armament. We reaffirm the commitment made with our partners at the Williamsburg Summit to "devote our full political resources to reducing the threat of war." Canada remains determined to make its own contribution to arms control and disarmament negotiations.

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This Canadian approach is grounded in several elements: our founding membership in NATO, our dedication to the global dimension of peace and stability, our active pursuit of verifiable arms control and disarmament agreements, and our longstanding decision not to develop our own national nuclear force.

NATO membership is a vital element in Canada's foreign and defence policy, which includes firm adherence to NATO's strategy of nuclear deterrence. Canada has therefore long provided facilities for the operational training of both nuclear-capable and conventional forces of our NATO allies. Current examples include operational training exercises carried out by B-52 bombers of the USA Strategic Air Command, and the use by British and German Air Forces of Goose Bay airfield and associated low-level flight training areas. As with the proposed cruise missile tests, all these aircrafts are unarmed -- no nuclear weapons have been or will be tested in Canada. The essential purpose is also the same -- the maintenance of strong and reliable Alliance deterrent forces.

The air-launched cruise missile is an important element of the United States central strategic forces which provide the ultimate deterrent in NATO's strategic triad. The ground-launched cruise missile will be a key factor in the determination of NATO's deterrent posture in the European theatre, given the increased threat posed by the Soviet deployment of SS-20 missiles. Both cruise missiles serve Canadian security interests: the former through the direct protection of Canadian territory, and the latter through the direct protection of Canadian interests within the North Atlantic Alliance. By testing vital elements of the technology common to both these systems, Canada will be assisting in the maintenance of its own defence as well as NATO's deterrent posture.

In announcing the Government's decision to test the cruise missile, Ministers emphasized that this in no way changed Canada's own renunciation of nuclear weapons for our national forces. Canada has foregone the production and development of nuclear weapons. The Canadian Forces concentrate exclusively on conventional roles in collective defence arrangements. All nuclear capability was removed from the Canadian Forces in Europe in the early 1970's. In the coming months, as the new CF-18 aircraft are deployed the last nuclear weapons capability now held in Canada will also be removed.

This national non-nuclear role imposes obligations, such as the test and evaluation programs agreed with our allies. It also provides a unique opportunity for international influence on arms control and disarmament questions. Canada thus maintains a clear and credible voice in the United Nations and in other councils dedicated to the search for peace and security.

Ministers believe that Canadians can be proud of our record of contribution to the critical break-throughs in nuclear arms control, such as the Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1968. Ministers also believe that they express the hopes and expectations of many Canadians by declaring that this country's dedication to arms control remains among our highest priorities.

Canada's support for a comprehensive multilateral nuclear test ban treaty continues to be vigorous and unrelenting. Our work for a more effective non-proliferation regime, enhanced by Canada's expertise in the peaceful use of nuclear energy, will not slacken. We continue to press for reductions and limitations of conventional forces, and for a ban on the development, testing and deployment of all weapons for use in outer space. We are in the forefront of efforts to abolish chemical weapons.

Beyond these initiatives and proposals lie the broader questions of mutual confidence and trust which are essential to any meaningful arms reduction. Verification is at the core of confidence building. Canada will continue to place particular importance on the development of verification mechanisms fundamental to trust in arms control agreements. The Government reaffirms its conviction that constructive dialogue is essential to building a climate of confidence among the nuclear powers and other nations.

Canada will therefore continue to play its full part in the Alliance consultations on the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Force negotiations, and in consultations with the USA on the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks. Progress in these talks, at the current juncture, requires a blend of strength and flexibility, a readiness to defend and a readiness to negotiate. This posture, to be effective, must be common to all those engaged in the crucial issues of security and survival. It is embodied in Canadian policy.

The Government of Canada, in accordance with the above considerations of the highest national and international gravity, can do no less than agree to test the unarmed cruise missile over Canadian territory.

SECRETARY
OF STATE
FOR EXTERNAL
AFFAIRS.

SECRÉTAIRE
D'ÉTAT AUX
AFFAIRES
EXTÉRIEURES.

TEXT OF A LETTER OF JULY 15, 1983
FROM THE HONOURABLE ALLAN J. MACEachEN,
DEPUTY-PRIME MINISTER AND
SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,
TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE,
GEORGE SHULTZ,
CONCERNING THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT
DECISION TO TEST THE
CRUISE MISSILE

TEXTE D'UNE LETTRE DU 15 JUILLET 1983
DE L'HONORABLE ALLAN J. MACEachEN,
VICE-PREMIER MINISTRE ET
SECRÉTAIRE D'ÉTAT
AUX AFFAIRES EXTÉRIEURES,
AU SECRÉTAIRE D'ÉTAT,
GEORGE SHULTZ,
CONCERNANT LA DÉCISION DU
GOUVERNEMENT CANADIEN
DE METTRE À L'ESSAI
LE MISSILE DE CROISIÈRE DÉSARMÉ

OTTAWA, Ontario
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July 15, 1983

The Hon. George P. Shultz
Secretary of State
State Department
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Dear George,

You will recall that when I wrote to you on January 21, I underlined the serious concern of the Canadian people about the decision their Government might take on the anticipated U.S. request to test the cruise missile in Canada. At that time I stressed how important it was for the Government to be able to assure the Canadian public that the arms control aspect of the negotiations in Geneva is being pursued as vigorously and as earnestly as is the deployment of new missiles.

The Canadian Government has considered very carefully your Government's request under our framework agreement to test the cruise missile in Canada. I am now in a position to inform you that the Government has decided to approve the request.

Because the weapons-testing issue raises fundamental questions affecting global security, my Cabinet colleagues have asked me to write you to set out in some detail the context in which this decision has been taken.

Canada joined in the NATO "two-track" decision in 1979, under which new Allied missiles will be deployed in Europe beginning this year unless a verifiable agreement can be reached with the Soviet Union to make this action unnecessary. When we met with our NATO colleagues in Paris

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in June we agreed that, if the negotiations are to succeed, it will be important for all the Allies to stand together behind their decision. As our contribution to this solidarity, Canada has agreed to help test vital components of the technology of the cruise missile.

At the Williamsburg Summit Conference our leaders pledged themselves to "devote our full political resources to reducing the threat of war." Now that we have agreed to participate in the development of a major weapons system, we believe that Canada has an even greater obligation to join in the search for a secure peace. For this reason, the Canadian Government has resolved to be even more vigorous than in the past in promoting creative disarmament and arms control initiatives. More particularly, it is the Canadian Government's firm intention to redouble its efforts in the coming months to contribute to the progress and eventual success of current negotiations. I am pleased that we appear to be on the verge of approving a new set of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament in Europe, to be held in Stockholm.

As you may be aware, George, one of our major long-standing preoccupations in Canada has been to achieve a greater degree of mutual confidence and trust between East and West. It has been and continues to be our firm belief that the problem of verification is at the core of the disarmament and arms control issues. The Canadian Government therefore proposes to press vigorously the issue of verification in forthcoming disarmament and arms control negotiations.

In your reply to my letter of January 21, you expressed agreement with my view of the importance of intensified consultations between our two Governments on these vital issues in the months ahead. I look forward to an enhanced dialogue between us, in which I shall be pursuing with you the themes mentioned above.

Yours sincerely,

Allan J. MacEachen

OTTAWA, Ontario
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Le 15 juillet 1983

L'honorable George P. Shultz
Secrétaire d'État
Département d'État
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Monsieur le secrétaire d'État,

Vous vous rappellerez que, dans la lettre que je vous adressais le 21 janvier, je soulignais l'intérêt marqué que portait la population canadienne à la décision que pourrait prendre son gouvernement lorsque lui parviendrait la demande attendue des États-Unis en vue de la mise à l'essai du missile de croisière au Canada. À ce moment, j'avais souligné combien il importait que le Gouvernement puisse donner au public canadien l'assurance que l'on cherchait, dans le cadre des négociations de Genève, à réaliser un accord sur le contrôle des armements avec la même vigueur et la même ardeur que l'on mettait à préparer le déploiement de nouveaux missiles.

Le Gouvernement canadien a étudié très attentivement la demande de mise à l'essai du missile de croisière au Canada que votre Gouvernement a présentée en vertu de l'accord-cadre. Je suis maintenant en mesure de vous informer que le Gouvernement canadien a décidé d'accéder à cette demande.

Étant donné que les essais d'armes soulèvent des questions fondamentales qui touchent à la sécurité mondiale, mes collègues du Cabinet m'ont demandé de vous écrire pour vous exposer de façon quelque peu détaillée les raisons qui ont motivé cette décision.

Le Canada a souscrit à la décision à "deux volets" de l'OTAN en 1979, décision aux termes de laquelle de nouveaux missiles de l'Alliance seront déployés en Europe à compter de cette année à moins que n'intervienne avec l'Union soviétique un accord vérifiable qui rende cette action inutile. Lorsque nous nous sommes réunis avec nos collègues de l'OTAN à Paris en juin, nous avons convenu que les négociations ne pourront être couronnées de succès que si les Alliés s'en tiennent solidairement à la décision qu'ils ont prise. Comme signe de cette solidarité, le Canada a convenu d'aider à la mise à l'essai des composantes vitales de la technologie rattachée au missile de croisière.

Lors du Sommet de Williamsburg, nos dirigeants se sont engagés à "consacrer toute [leur] volonté à réduire la menace de guerre." Maintenant que nous avons accepté de contribuer au développement d'un important système d'armement, nous estimons que le Canada se doit d'autant plus de participer à la recherche d'une paix stable. Voilà pourquoi le Gouvernement canadien a pris la résolution de promouvoir plus vigoureusement encore que par le passé des initiatives créatrices dans le domaine du désarmement et du contrôle des armements. De façon plus particulière, il a la ferme intention de redoubler d'efforts au cours des mois qui viennent pour contribuer au progrès et au succès des négociations en cours. À ce propos, je suis heureux de constater que nous semblons sur le point d'approuver la tenue d'une nouvelle série de négociations dans le cadre de la Conférence sur le désarmement en Europe, qui se déroulera à Stockholm.

Comme vous le savez peut-être, mon cher George, les Canadiens ont depuis longtemps à coeur le renforcement de la confiance entre l'Est et l'Ouest. Nous avons toujours eu la ferme conviction que le problème de la vérification est au centre des questions liées au désarmement et au contrôle des armements. Voilà pourquoi le Gouvernement canadien entend mettre résolument l'accent sur la question de la vérification lors des négociations prochaines sur le désarmement et le contrôle des armements.

Dans votre réponse à ma lettre du 21 janvier, vous conveniez avec moi de l'importance de consultations plus suivies entre nos deux Gouvernements sur ces questions vitales au cours des mois qui allaient suivre. Je me réjouis à la perspective d'un dialogue plus intense entre nous sur les points que je viens d'évoquer.

Je vous prie de croire, Monsieur le secrétaire d'État, à l'assurance de ma plus haute considération.

Allan J. MacEachen