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OPENING REMARKS BY THE
HONOURABLE ALLAN J. MACEachEN,
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND
SECRETARY OF STATES FOR
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, TO THE
INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE
FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES

SILVER JUBILEE CONFERENCE

OTTAWA,
SEPTEMBER 8, 1983

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

I would like to welcome you to Ottawa on behalf of the Government of Canada. We are honoured at having here so many distinguished political personalities and specialists on strategic studies. In view of your founder, Alastair Buchan's close associations with this country, it is particularly suitable that you have chosen Ottawa as the site for your Silver Jubilee Meeting. The way in which your Institute has expanded in prestige, influence and scope over the past twenty-five years is a tribute to Mr. Buchan's vision and ability.

Your choice of topics for this year's Conference - The Conduct of East-West Relations in the 1980s - has been given added urgency by the events of the past week. We have had a vivid reminder of the differences between Soviet and Western values, with the shooting down of the Korean civilian airliner by Soviet military aircraft. After a week of repeated representations, we have not received any satisfactory explanation of the circumstances of the tragedy or even a direct expression of sympathy or condolences. Earlier this summer, we had detected what we considered to be signs of Soviet interest in improving at least the atmosphere in which East-West relations are conducted. Now we have had a fresh reaffirmation of the obsessive priority the Soviet Union attaches to its military security, and its marked insensitivity to the legitimate concerns of other nations. I am amazed that the Soviet Foreign Minister could use the Madrid Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe to reiterate in the starkest terms a total disregard for human life in the defence of what the Soviet Union considers to be its State interests.

This week will, therefore, be an appropriate occasion for analyzing, as your First Committee is doing, the balance of military power between East and West. In NATO, we have been preoccupied by the Soviet Union's actions and its growing military power. We have agreed on the need to strengthen NATO's conventional forces.

For its part, the Canadian Government has been increasing its spending on capital equipment for the Canadian Armed Forces. We are, for example, introducing the CF-18 aircraft for our Forces in both Canada and Europe, and have just ordered six new frigates. We joined with our allies in June in reaffirming the "two-track" decision under which NATO will begin the deployment at the end of this year of new intermediate-range nuclear missiles to counter the Soviet SS-20 missiles, if concrete results cannot be reached in the negotiations in Geneva. As a contribution to NATO's deterrent posture, the Canadian Government has agreed to the testing in this country of the USA air-launched cruise missile.

NATO governments have concluded, in the face of the Soviet Union's increasingly powerful Armed Forces, that we must strengthen our own defence capabilities. At the same time, we are convinced that all countries - East and West - could be more secure with balanced, verifiable arms control agreements, at lower levels of armaments, than we would be with an uncontrolled arms race. Last week's event has altered the climate and has had the effect of increasing tensions among our people. However this event does not alter our conclusion on our security and the need for reduced armaments. We have entered into disarmament and arms control talks because we think they are in our national and international interests, and not as a favour to the Soviet Union. However, recent Soviet behaviour will undoubtedly affect the atmosphere in which the talks are conducted. Public confidence in Soviet willingness to abide by the rules of law or international agreements and to act prudently in the exercise of its military capabilities has been badly shaken. Nonetheless, despite these events, we in the West must continue to press ahead with the negotiations upon which we have embarked.

At the Williamsburg Summit, the leaders of the seven major industrialized nations pledged themselves to "devote our full political resources to reducing the threat of war". The most critical of the arms control negotiations are being carried on directly between the USA and the Soviet Union, in the strategic arms reduction talks and the intermediate-range nuclear force talks in Geneva. Particularly in the case of the INF talks, the United States has consulted its allies closely in formulating its position and carrying out the negotiations. In addition, there are other negotiations in which a wider group of nations are more directly involved. In these discussions, Canada attaches particular importance to the negotiation of a comprehensive test ban treaty, a chemical weapons convention, a treaty to

ban all weapons for use in outer space and last but not least, the prevention of the further spread of nuclear weapons through the evolution of a more effective non-proliferation regime. In all these areas, we are resolved to be even more vigorous in promoting creative disarmament and arms control initiatives.

When the late Lester B. Pearson accepted the Nobel Peace Prize in 1957, at a time when your Institute was being founded, he warned that in the nuclear age, nations face a choice between peace and extinction. The terrifying instruments of destruction to which he referred have been replaced by new and more deadly successors. For the past 35 years, NATO's policy of deterrence has helped to secure peace between East and West. We must maintain an effective deterrent, both conventional and nuclear. But we must move beyond this and reach the goal set at Williamsburg - to achieve our version of a world in which the shadow of war has been lifted from all mankind.

We ask the Soviet Union to make an equal commitment to peace. The universal outrage at the shooting down of the Korean airliner should have demonstrated to them that to earn international respect they must act with humanity and a decent regard for the rule of law.

I am confident that your discussions will help to clarify the complex issues involved in the conduct of East-West relations which are so important to the future of all of us and all mankind. I am pleased to declare the Conference open and to wish you well.