

# *Statement*

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**NOTES FOR AN ADDRESS BY  
THE HONOURABLE ANDRÉ OUELLET,  
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS,  
TO THE NPT REVIEW AND EXTENSION CONFERENCE**

**NEW YORK, New York  
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Government  
of Canada

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du Canada

**Canada**

Mr. Chairman:

We are gathered here to review the world's most successful security treaty and to make an historic decision on its future.

These would be daunting responsibilities, were it not for the fact that we are not starting from scratch. The backdrop to our deliberations is the growing global consensus in favour of stopping nuclear proliferation and undertaking nuclear disarmament.

This meeting will give us the opportunity to deal with continuing instability and uncertainty in the world, including tragic regional tensions and conflicts, which make the existence of the NPT [Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty] even more important.

In signing the NPT, 176 countries have already declared their commitment to the global norms and principles the Treaty upholds.

Our ultimate goal is universalization of the Treaty. This is why Canada wants to transform this commitment into a permanent reality. We should indefinitely and unconditionally extend the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

As we undertake our work, the real challenge will be to keep our common goal - the strengthening of the global non-proliferation system - firmly and clearly in mind, and to let nothing interfere with our commitment to making the world a safer place.

We must be ever-conscious of the fact that we have been given the responsibility by our publics to make a decision not only on their behalf, but also on behalf of future generations. Our decision will directly affect the security and well-being of the people of the world well into the next century.

Canada believes that the global public should be able to enter the 21st century with a sense of hope, excitement and anticipation. We have a profound responsibility to act in the interests of the world. This historic decision - in favour of indefinite extension - is ours to make.

### **The Canadian Context**

Canada's approach to this meeting is shaped by several realities:

First, we come to the nuclear non-proliferation debate with a wide background of technical and political experience. We were a partner in the Manhattan Project. Early on, Canada made a deliberate political decision not to use our technical expertise and capabilities to make nuclear weapons.

Thus, we are a non-nuclear weapons state party of the NPT. Our approach to the debate on the functioning and future of the Treaty is shaped by this fact.

Second, and related, we come to this meeting as a major player in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In Canada, under the unique umbrella provided by the NPT, we are engaged in a wide spectrum of activities – from the mining and export of uranium to the design, production and export of one of the world's safest reactors: the CANDU. We have nuclear relations with 31 countries in all regions of the world.

Finally, we approach this meeting in the broader context: that of strengthening the United Nations and the framework of international norms and principles that turn the reality of interdependence from a source of potential conflict and difficulty into an asset and advantage.

Canada has a long-standing and enduring commitment to multilateralism. We want to work with friends and partners around the world to develop a security architecture for the 21st century that is inclusive and universal in its embrace. To do this, we must reinforce the rule of law among nations by, inter alia, building up the framework of international treaties respecting non-proliferation and disarmament. We must comply fully with them. Any arguments that mistakenly dwell on perceived losses of national sovereignty must be confronted by the acknowledgment of the tangible gains in security – the very reason why we enter into them as sovereign states.

The world – and particularly each of our local neighbourhoods – will be a safer place once there is universal adherence to the key non-proliferation instruments: beginning with the NPT but also encompassing the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons covering land mines.

Collective, co-operative security is the only practical option left for the world. We had 40 years of experience in sterile bloc politics. We have now had time to reflect, and we realize that this did not provide the basis we need to meet future challenges.

This meeting gives us a special opportunity to renew and revitalize our common commitment to collective security.

We are faced with two sets of issues: the review of the functioning of the Treaty over the past five years and the extension decision.

### **The Review**

As it has done throughout the 25-year history of the NPT, Canada welcomes this five-yearly opportunity to review the operation of the Treaty, to assure that "the purposes of the preamble and the

provisions of the Treaty are being realized" – as provided for in the Treaty itself.

We welcome this opportunity because we are convinced that a serious review of the Treaty will more than adequately and positively answer the legitimate questions: Are the purposes and provisions of the Treaty being realized? Has the Treaty fostered the development and adoption of "measures to safeguard the security of peoples?"

Canada advocates permanence with accountability. We believe that the five-yearly review conferences should be enhanced. States that are party to the NPT must be held to account for their custody of its values and for fulfilling all of its provisions. At this conference, the Canadian delegation looks forward to discussions aimed at enhancing the review conferences. Ways must be identified to engage the political levels in these conferences, not only to improve oversight of the NPT's implementation, but also to re-inforce measures aimed at progressive fulfilment of all the NPT's goals.

Let's look at the NPT's balance sheet as we enter the Review Conference.

A central purpose of the NPT was – and remains – the prevention of the further spread of nuclear weapons beyond the five postwar nuclear powers. Has the Treaty worked? In our view, yes.

In 1970, when the NPT entered into force, there were serious fears and numerous predictions that 25, and even more, states would possess nuclear arsenals by the time of the extension decision in 1995. This has not happened.

The fear of the potential proliferation of nuclear weapons that constituted the primary motivation of all states – nuclear and non-nuclear – to conclude the NPT and become parties has not occurred. This is a fact. Our collective security has benefited immeasurably.

At the regional level, with a few unfortunate exceptions, countries have not responded to nuclear-armed or nuclear-aspiring neighbours by diverting precious resources into the meaningless, wasteful pit of nuclear arms production.

The NPT is directly responsible for these realities.

But the threat of nuclear proliferation has not gone away. It is as real as it was in 1970. Now is not the time to abandon or imperil the Treaty. Indeed, given the situation today, if the NPT did not already exist, we would certainly be working to create it.

There are some in this room who were amongst the prescient drafters of this elegant Treaty, which has contributed so fundamentally to global security. They should be congratulated on their achievement.

Those who seek to damage the Treaty should think seriously of how difficult it would be to repair or recreate it.

But the NPT is about more than containing proliferation. It enshrines fundamental, enduring norms and principles governing nuclear behaviour, in order to enable the use of nuclear energy for economic development.

Article III mandates safeguards agreements, which provide the means to verify the peaceful, non-explosive uses of nuclear materials. For Canada, such assurances represent the essential starting point for the conduct of our nuclear co-operation and commerce.

The application of safeguards affords a degree of transparency to national nuclear programs that serves to support the benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

We will be asked at this Conference to lend our support to the IAEA's [International Atomic Energy Agency] 93+2 program to strengthen and streamline the application of safeguards. Because of the enhanced transparency and added assurance of peaceful, non-explosive use that this program will provide - including detecting clandestine nuclear activities - Canada will advocate firm support by NPT states of this initiative.

Article III also sets out standards for responsible behaviour on the part of supplier states, and provides the requirement for the establishment of complementary mechanisms, such as export-control regimes.

Safeguards and export controls reinforce each other and together provide assurances that nuclear weapons programs are not being secretly pursued. They provide confidence that suppliers are acting responsibly in fulfilling their commitments to the Treaty. In this way, all states - even non-NPT parties - derive security benefits from the Treaty.

Article IV establishes a principle that is of pure benefit to NPT states - all NPT countries gain from the peaceful applications of nuclear energy and technology. The record in this regard is solid. Where appropriate to national needs, an increasing number of NPT countries are involved in the use and application of nuclear energy and technology.

Article VII offers a substantial benefit to non-nuclear weapons states. It provides a legal underpinning for the establishment of nuclear weapons-free zones [NWFZ]. These arrangements significantly enhance the security of those countries that are party to them. Canada believes that this is another positive element of regional and international security.

It is the principle laid down by the NPT in Article VII that makes NWFZs credible and more secure. Surely, another "plus" on our review ledger.

#### Article VI

The NPT is not a static arrangement. In Article VI, the Treaty provides for a dynamic, ongoing process of negotiations, in good faith, to cease the nuclear arms race and to undertake nuclear disarmament. More than that, it establishes a radical agenda that would result in a treaty on "general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control."

In assessing the Treaty's effectiveness with regard to Article VI, we should first recognize and welcome the fact that among the states party to the Treaty, the nuclear arms race has ended.

Russia and the United States continue to take bold steps to disarm. Indeed, here the race has changed from an arms race to a joint, bilateral undertaking to race forward on an ambitious and courageous agenda for nuclear disarmament.

Other nuclear weapons states [NWS] have made unilateral cuts to their nuclear arsenals. This is all done against the backdrop of security calculations made by the NWS, which begin with the NPT.

There have been other significant, positive steps forward on the nuclear arms control and disarmament agenda, which represent concrete progress in fulfilling both Article VI and the preamble of the Treaty.

We are convinced that it is only the framework of stability, security and predictability provided by the NPT that has made progress on the nuclear arms control and disarmament agenda possible. Thus, those who seek radical disarmament should be the strongest proponents of the indefinite extension of the Treaty.

Under the NPT's broad security umbrella, we have seen truly extraordinary steps taken in recent years:

- First, we are engaged in negotiations for a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, which will fulfil our commitment in the preamble to "achieve the discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time" and in all environments. Work is proceeding well. Our experts are close to establishing an effective verification mechanism. Canada is greatly encouraged by work to date, and we believe that this Treaty, once no more than a far-off dream, will soon be reality.

The Canadian delegation has been instructed to make speed and all possible progress to bring these negotiations to a successful, timely conclusion. We hope that other delegations

will receive similar guidance. We also hope that, in the spirit of the negotiations under way, the NWS will refrain from testing during this interim period.

- Second, building on the momentum of the CTBT [Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty] negotiations and reflecting the real political will to act on the nuclear disarmament agenda, the Conference on Disarmament made a major decision on March 23 to begin negotiations on a convention to prohibit the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons purposes – the "Cut-off Convention."

It is with considerable pride that I make this statement for two reasons: first, the negotiation of a Cut-off Convention has been a long-standing Canadian foreign-policy objective. Second, it was after almost 14 months of concerted effort by Canada's Ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament that this consensus for a negotiating mandate was achieved.

Of course, our work is not over on this issue – it has only begun. The conclusion of an effective Cut-off Convention will require the concerted and consistent application of political will and diplomatic imagination. Canada, for its part, is firmly committed to these negotiations.

- Third, the NWS have taken significant steps with their recent declarations on security assurances. The provision of such assurances, like the further extension of nuclear weapons-free zones, are important confidence-building measures that are in everyone's security interest.

Further, the major nuclear weapons states have recommitted themselves to their Article VI obligations. This sends a powerful message on behalf of the future nuclear disarmament agenda.

These developments, welcome as they are, would make little sense in the absence of the NPT. Without the NPT, the keystone of the non-proliferation system, the effectiveness of these complementary arrangements would be seriously questioned.

Thus, it is not simply that in order to make progress on the nuclear control and disarmament agenda we need the NPT; it is that we need the NPT in order to derive full and maximum benefit from these other disarmament efforts.

#### Why the NPT?

The fact is that the NPT provides a stable, predictable security environment, which is the prerequisite for nuclear disarmament.

As I said earlier, Canada believes the NPT must link permanence with accountability. Future review conferences will ensure that, every five years, we will have the opportunity to strengthen compliance with Article VI as well as the other provisions of the Treaty.

There is simply no substitute for the NPT. Its benefits for non-nuclear weapons states, in terms of bringing the NWS into compliance over time with the fundamental standards set out by the NPT, are invaluable.

I believe that the Treaty speaks for itself in terms of its value and the need to perpetuate it indefinitely. We are faced with three simple choices: to extend the Treaty indefinitely, for a fixed period, or for a number of fixed periods.

Only indefinite extension guarantees the future existence of the Treaty. Anything less runs the risk of calling the NPT into question at some future point.

Indefinitely extending the NPT means enshrining, permanently, the legal commitment to dismantle all nuclear arsenals. The NPT is the only multilateral legal instrument to contain such an injunction. Without it, we have nothing.

There is a temptation to say that countries can be forced into timetables and meeting goals that they have had no role in developing. In our view, this is an unproductive course. We believe that the seriousness of the issue demands that we think, speak and act pragmatically.

In conclusion, as NPT states parties, we have the political responsibility to make a decision that responds to present realities and positions us to meet future challenges. This Treaty is our flexible instrument for dealing with nuclear non-proliferation; it is our instrument for promoting and achieving nuclear disarmament.

Canada is committed to both elements of the Treaty.

We are confident that all of the countries gathered here are committed to the Treaty. We should all be committed because the NPT provides us with enhanced security.

Let us use the only opportunity to make a firm, political decision in favour of indefinite and unconditional extension.

Thank you.