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CANADA SUPPORTS NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, today strongly reaffirmed Canada's abiding support for the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). He recalled that July, 1988 marks the twentieth anniversary of the treaty (NPT) and that Canada was one of its earliest adherents.

The NPT's continuing major importance, said Mr. Clark, has been that it provides for legally binding commitments to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and facilitates international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Another key element is that it sets out a guiding framework for the negotiated reduction of nuclear arsenals.

The Minister emphasized that Canada is a major advocate of universal adherence to the NPT in support of these fundamental policy objectives. Although the treaty, with 137 states party, has broad support from all regions, Mr. Clark expressed concern that a number of states with advanced nuclear capabilities have declined to accede to the NPT. He noted that, last month, he instructed Canadian Embassies to inform each country whose government has not yet ratified the NPT that Canada attaches particular importance to the need for all states to become full parties. Mr. Clark welcomed the recent accession of Spain to the NPT, as well as Saudi Arabia's announced intention to accede, and expressed the hope that other non-parties would follow their example.

Mr. Clark pointed with satisfaction to the noteworthy USA/USSR developments in nuclear arms control and disarmament in the past year in conformity with the objectives of the disarmament provisions of the NPT. While recognizing that deep reductions in nuclear arsenals remain a central Canadian objective, the Minister reaffirmed that efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons are equally important. Mr. Clark expressed the hope that significant progress toward both of these important goals would be made before the 1990 NPT Review Conference where the operation of the NPT, which is scheduled for renewal in 1995, will be discussed.

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Secretary of State
for
External Affairs

Secrétaire d'État
aux
Affaires extérieures

Canada

It is Mr. Clark's view that the NPT, which has already made a major contribution to non-proliferation, will continue to be a vital factor in strengthening international security and cooperation.