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SIGNALS OF HOPE:
Canada and the International
Year of Peace

Address by Douglas Roche,
Ambassador for Disarmament,
to the Conference on
"Canada, the World and the
Future" at the University
of Alberta

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What is meant by the United Nations proclamation declaring 1986 as the International Year of Peace? And what does it mean to Canada?

IYP is essentially a challenge to the governments and peoples of the world to focus more clearly on the multi-dimensional nature of peace -- conflict resolution, economic and social development, human rights, elimination of racial discrimination, as well as the traditional issues of arms control and disarmament.

Peace can no longer be defined as the absence of war, though the avoidance of nuclear war must be the chief priority.

Peace requires more than a reduction of arms, though disarmament measures are essential.

Peace demands the attaining of true human security so that people everywhere can live free of the threat of war, free of violations of their human rights, free to develop their own lives to attain economic and social progress.

Peace, then, is a multi-splendored goal.

No one expects that this goal can be achieved by December 31, 1986. That is not the idea behind the International Year of Peace. Rather, IYP highlights the broad international agenda that must be advanced as the world continues to evolve into a global community with increasingly closer relationships among all peoples.

This growing recognition that the planet is a place of common ground, with common vulnerability and common opportunity is the real message of IYP. It establishes peace as a system of values. This is clearly an advance in global thinking. And this advance constitutes a signal of hope to a humanity that has for too long been fractured and frustrated in the attaining of enduring human security.

All this is a subject critical to Canada's interests in the modern world as was indicated by Canada's co-sponsorship of the IYP resolution at the United Nations.

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It seems as if the world has two political axes -- East/West and North/South.

The East/West axis has been characterised by forty years of tension, of escalating armaments and declining understanding. East-West relations have come to be defined in terms of the nuclear arsenals of overwhelming destructive potential possessed by the two superpowers.

The North/South axis is characterised by decades of deprivation, famine, homelessness and disease. North-South relations have come to be defined in terms of the stark disparities in resources and opportunities which exist between a privileged minority of the world's population, who enjoy great prosperity, and the vast majority afflicted with utter destitution.

The management of these two sets of relationships is the starting point on the route to peace. East/West relations focus on the negotiated limitation and reduction of arms and the building of confidence and trust; North-South relations focus on the sound economic development of the most impoverished nations in the world.

The U.N.'s 1985 Report on the World Social Situation reveals how far we have to go to achieve these goals:

- In 1984, global military expenditure was \$800 billion -- approximately \$130 for every man, woman and child in the world. This is equivalent to more than the average income of many developing countries;
- In 1980, military spending by developed countries represented more than 10 times the amount spent by developing countries on health programmes;
- The cost of a single nuclear submarine equals the annual education budget of 23 developing countries with a total of 160 million school children.

The field of arms control is itself highly complex, technical and, above all, political. It is easy to advocate ridding the world of nuclear weapons, numerous proposals have been put forward since the Baruch Plan of 1946, but it has been very difficult to find a way of negotiating them down to acceptable levels on the basis of equality and equal security.

A significant step was taken in this direction at the November 1985 Summit meeting between General Secretary Gorbachev and President Reagan. In their joint declaration, the leaders agreed that "a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought." As well, they identified several areas in which the USA and USSR had a common interest in progress. These included:

- accelerated work at the nuclear and space talks which began in March, 1985;
- the further enhancing of the Non-Proliferation Treaty;
- accelerated global efforts to conclude an effective and verifiable convention banning chemical weapons;
- agreement to work for positive results at the Vienna MBFR Talks and the Stockholm Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe.

Establishing and sustaining political dialogue at the highest level in order to build on the common ground between East and West is a step of fundamental importance.

This approach has been a consistent element of Canadian foreign policy. At the conclusion of his visits to many world capitals in 1983, Former Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau suggested ten principles of a common bond between East and West:

- Both sides agree that a nuclear war cannot be won.
- Both sides agree that a nuclear war must never be fought.
- Both sides wish to be free of the risk of accidental war or of surprise attack.
- Both sides recognize the dangers inherent in destabilizing weapons.
- Both sides understand the need for improved techniques of crisis management.
- Both sides are conscious of the awesome consequences of being the first to use force against the other.
- Both sides have an interest in increasing security while reducing the cost.

- Both sides have an interest in avoiding the spread of nuclear weapons to other countries, so-called horizontal proliferation.
- Both sides have come to a guarded recognition of each other's legitimate security interests.
- Both sides realize that their security strategies cannot be based on the assumed political or economic collapse of the other side.

These principles, reflected in the Gorbachev-Reagan Summit statement, broaden the perspective of East-West relations and stimulate greater international effort in the search for a durable peace.

In his first speech immediately after assuming office in September, 1984, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney reiterated the commitment of the Canadian government to work effectively within the world's multilateral forums to reduce tensions, alleviate conflict and create the conditions for a lasting peace. He said:

"There can be no let up in our efforts to reduce the threat of war. No matter how frustrating or difficult, negotiations must be pursued...The exercise of political will is nowhere more important than on this issue on whose outcome the lives of our children and humanity depend."

And he added:

"No matter how much we may accomplish here in Canada, I will have failed in my most cherished ambition if under my leadership Canada has not helped reduce the threat of war and enhance the promise of peace."

External Affairs Minister Joe Clark carried the Government's commitment into the global community when he stated in an address to the 39th General Assembly of the United Nations:

"Canada, for its part, is determined to continue to play a leading role in the search for peace and disarmament. We believe the nuclear build-up threatens the life of every Canadian, and the existence of human society. Countries like our own must use influence to reverse that build-up and reduce the danger of destruction. That will be a constant, consistent, dominant priority of Canadian foreign policy."

Canada has a long, constructive history of active engagement with the most important global issues. This tradition was outlined by Mr. Clark in the foreword to the Government's Green Paper on foreign policy:

"We assisted at San Francisco in the creation of the U.N. We were at Bretton Woods when the post-war monetary system was designed. We were at Havana and Geneva as well, where the international trading system was conceived. We have worked diligently ever since to improve international order -- Lester Pearson and peacekeeping, Howard Green and the Partial Test Ban Treaty, Paul Martin and membership in the U.N. for newly independent states, Pierre Trudeau and cooperation between North and South and between East and West."

Although 1986 is designated by the U.N. as the International Year of Peace, every year is a year to work for peace and Canada will go on pushing and probing for viable ways to stop the spread of nuclear weapons with the motivation and spirit described in the 1984 Throne Speech:

"Patience and perseverance we will need, for in this endeavor even the smallest progress is worthy of the greatest effort."

Thus, Canada, along with its allies, works to influence and assist the bilateral negotiations in positive, constructive ways in order to achieve radical reductions in nuclear weapons. This is done through a great deal of unpublicized effort. Though there is only room for the two superpowers at the Geneva negotiating table, Canada constantly stresses that the conduct of these negotiations will have an impact on every nation on earth. The ongoing negotiations -- with their series of offers and counter-offers -- indicates the scope and complexity of the extensive systems of nuclear arms possessed by both sides. Though agreement still seems a long way off, most experienced observers are now reflecting cautious optimism.

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Canada has traditionally taken a broad approach to security -- defining it not simply in terms of military might, but in a way which places it in a wider context. There are four components of Canada's security policy:

- arms control and disarmament;
- defence;
- peacekeeping; and
- conflict resolution.

The Government has identified six specific objectives on the arms control and disarmament agenda:

- negotiated radical reductions in nuclear forces and the enhancement of strategic stability;
- maintenance and strengthening of the non-proliferation régime;
- support for a comprehensive test ban treaty;
- negotiation of a global chemical weapons ban;
- prevention of an arms race in outer space; and
- the building of confidence sufficient to facilitate the reduction of military forces in Europe and elsewhere.

How does Canada advance these objectives?

Canada warmly welcomed the announcement in January, 1985 made by the United States and the Soviet Union on the resumption of bilateral talks. In this past year we have used all channels open to us to actively encourage, support and facilitate the conduct of serious and constructive negotiations.

Canada has had an ongoing series of consultations and discussions with the United States -- bilaterally and along with our allies in NATO -- on the progress of these negotiations.

Prime Minister Mulroney and President Reagan have had several meetings and conversations in which Canada's concerns and interest in the negotiations have been stressed.

Within NATO, we have encouraged regular, detailed discussions of the Geneva talks and their implications for Alliance policies.

As well, Canada has engaged in an active dialogue with the Soviet Union. The Prime Minister has written to General Secretary Gorbachev outlining Canada's views and priorities on arms control questions and Canada has conducted bilateral arms control and disarmament discussions with Soviet officials in Ottawa and in Moscow. Similar consultations have already occurred and others are being planned with selected East European countries.

Canada has practical contributions to make to the bilateral and multilateral arms control process. The Government's activity will be focussed in three directions:

- encouraging compliance with existing treaties;
- developing verification mechanisms; and
- building confidence between East and West.

Compliance with existing treaties remains key to a credible and viable arms control régime. Mr. Clark recently reaffirmed Canada's firm support for the régime created by the ABM Treaty and the existing SALT agreements on limiting strategic forces. He said:

"Our stance towards SDI research is rooted in the need to conform strictly with the provisions of the ABM Treaty. We will continue to urge the parties to these treaties to do nothing to undermine their integrity, but rather work to reinforce their status and authority."

Canada has long considered the Non Proliferation Treaty, now signed by 131 nations, as an essential component of international security. It is an important security lynchpin which benefits all countries by reducing the risk of nuclear proliferation and facilitates the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

The Third Review of the NPT, held last September in Geneva, produced a consensus document which reaffirmed the importance of the NPT.

Canada's own objectives at the Review Conference were clearly met -- the maintenance of the NPT as a basic element of the non-proliferation régime and a reaffirmation of the purposes and provisions of the Treaty.

Canada will continue to work to strengthen and enhance this Treaty, to maintain the impetus of the Review Conference in broadening the Treaty's membership and to encourage adherence to the letter and spirit of the Treaty.

The achievement of a Comprehensive Test Ban remains a fundamental objective for Canada. Recognising that there remain outstanding political and technical difficulties in the negotiation of a CTB, Canada is working steadily within the Conference on Disarmament to move forward on this important item.

There are few weapons of mass destruction as horrific as chemical weapons. Canada has been an active participant in the work now under way in the Conference on Disarmament to negotiate a multilateral, verifiable convention banning chemical weapons.

Canada is also engaged in the discussions at the Conference on Disarmament aimed at the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Canada submitted a detailed study of international law relating to arms control and outer space. This survey identifies a number of important themes for examination if an international treaty and preventing an arms race in space is to be successfully written.

The building of confidence in East-West relations is of great concern, for it is a prerequisite to arms control and disarmament. In both the Stockholm Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe and at the Vienna Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction Talks, Canada is working, with its allies, to find ways of achieving agreement on this issue.

The diversity of Canada's participation in the multilateral arms control and disarmament forums reflects the complexity of the problems as well as the need to construct a productive political atmosphere in order to negotiate equitable, durable and verifiable arms control agreements. One way of growing importance that Canada contributes to this process is with its extensive verification research programme.

Verification is not, of course, an end in itself, but it does enhance the effectiveness of treaties by promoting confidence and compliance in negotiated texts. A solid body of verifiable arms control treaties in which nations reposed a degree of confidence would go a long way toward easing tensions and mistrust. Verification, Mr. Clark recently pointed out to the House of Commons, "is an area where Canadian expertise and diplomacy come together."

Canada's verification programme supports our arms control and disarmament priorities by:

- undertaking research studies for problems applicable to international negotiations;
- promoting specialized training programmes;
- hosting international symposiums of experts on specific subjects;
- providing liaison with national and international bodies outside of Canada engaged in verification work;
- presenting to the public the issue of verification.

Since the programme's inception in 1983, nearly 100 projects have been undertaken directly in support of Canada's ongoing work in the Conference on Disarmament. As well, the verification programme supports the Vienna talks and the Stockholm conference.

Some of the programme's more recent activities include:

- the planned \$3.2 million upgrading of the Yellowknife seismic array as a major contribution to research into monitoring an eventual Comprehensive Test Ban;
- the presentation to the Secretary-General of the U.N. of a detailed handbook for use in investigating allegations of chemical or biological weapons use;
- the ongoing "Paxsat" projects designed to determine the feasibility of remote sensing from space-to-space or space-to-earth in the verification of an eventual treaty prohibiting weapons in space; and
- a series of comprehensive compendiums of statements made in the Conference on Disarmament and its predecessors, on the subjects of Chemical Weapons, Radiological Weapons, Outer Space and Verification.

This body of knowledge and expertise on verification issues is shared widely with the international community. In this way Canada is furthering, in a very practical way, the global arms control process.

Canada's credentials in this sort of serious background work on verification have been well-established and are now widely recognised in the multilateral forums. This may account, to some extent, for the unprecedented success Canada had in having the 40th General Assembly adopt by consensus a resolution on "Verification in all its Aspects."

This resolution gained the unanimous support of the international community on the legitimacy of verification as a genuine, necessary and integral component of the arms control process. Nations from the East, West and Neutral-Non-Aligned noted that, if disarmament measures are to be effective, they must be "fair and balanced, acceptable to all parties, their substance must be clear and compliance with them must be evident." The resolution calls upon Member States to "increase their efforts towards achieving agreements on balanced, mutually

acceptable, verifiable and effective arms limitation and disarmament measures." As well, it invites Member States to communicate to the Secretary-General, their views and suggestions on "verification principles, procedures and techniques to promote the inclusion of adequate verification in arms limitation and disarmament agreements and on the role of the U.N. in the field of verification."

The resolution has clearly helped in establishing common ground on the issue of verification, which is a basic component of multilateral and bilateral arms control work.

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The General Assembly's proclamation of the International Year of Peace goes well beyond the more traditional issues of disarmament and the peaceful settlement of disputes. It recognises that efforts to improve the conditions of life for people around the world and the natural environment can alleviate tensions and thereby make for a more peaceful world.

It is obvious that flagrant inequality between rich and poor is a potential source of instability; that incarceration, torture and murder of persons by their own or alien governments breeds bitterness and violence; that continuing desertification of vast tracts of Africa may force entire communities to move into the territory of others, with serious potential for conflict.

Canada has for many years made substantial efforts to alleviate such problems and we will remain active and persistent in seeking long-term solutions for them.

Canada's development assistance programmes recognize our humanitarian duty to help the world's poor, illiterate and afflicted; they also recognize the benefits for our own economic well-being of a more widely-shared prosperity. We are, therefore, committed to advancing issues of concern to the less-developed countries in a number of ways:

- a better definition of growth and adjustment in developing countries, through discussions under way in the World Bank and the IMF;
- strengthening the international trading system through the promotion of a new round of multilateral trade negotiations;
- participating in the special U.N. discussions on African development problems;

- strengthening the international economic negotiating machinery of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD); and
- improving the definition of international agricultural policies and seeking to make the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Food Programme work better.

Canada also helps to protect human rights through our participation in the Commission on Human Rights (currently in session in Geneva), the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly's Third Committee. Work is proceeding to allow Canada to ratify the international Convention against Torture. We have been especially heartened by recent political developments in Guatemala, Haiti and the Philippines, which point to new policies and better respect for the human rights of the peoples of those countries.

Canada has long striven to persuade the South African authorities of the injustice and short-sightedness of the system of apartheid. Last July, the Government announced a series of measures designed to stiffen the pressure on South Africa and to signal our profound dissatisfaction with its failure to put an end to institutionalised racial discrimination. Prime Minister Mulroney played a key role at the most recent meeting of Commonwealth Heads of Government in developing a Commonwealth plan of action. We are using every avenue to urge the South African Government to summon up the courage to dispense with this unjust and backward system. The Anglican Primate of Canada, Reverend Edward Scott, is a member of the Group of Eminent Persons now seeking a more open dialogue with South Africa in an effort to avert a major tragedy.

For more than a decade, Canada has been in the vanguard of international efforts to improve the management of the world's natural environment, but mankind is still witnessing the disastrous results of careless neglect. Acid rain is damaging our forests and the aquatic life in our lakes, the Sahara advances perceptibly into the hitherto fertile lands of the Sahel; cities are defiled by smog and undrinkable water. Efforts to combat environment damage must be based on the realistic premise that, though this is a long-term problem, action must start now.

Progress has been registered recently through international collaboration to reduce pollution in the Mediterranean and the signing last July of an international protocol on sulfur dioxide emissions. In 1986, we will continue to combat acid rain and Great Lakes pollution; in the Economic Commission for Europe, discussions are continuing to reduce

nitrous oxide emissions from industrial sources, power plants and motor vehicles; in the U.N. Environmental Programme, negotiations are under way on an international protocol on the protection of the earth's ozone layer. The World Commission on Environment and Development will visit Canada May 22-31 to examine environmental problems and better ways and means of resolving them. Groups and private citizens will have an opportunity to present views to the Commission.

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It is highly appropriate that the International Year of Peace will provide the backdrop for a U.N.-sponsored international conference this summer on one of the most important issues of our time -- the Relationship Between Disarmament and Development.

There are few issues that cut so broad a swath across the concerns of both developed and developing countries than the disarmament/development linkage. In concluding its 1981 "Study on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development," the U.N. Experts Group stated:

"... the world can either continue to pursue the arms race with characteristic vigour or move consciously and with deliberate speed toward a more stable and balanced social and economic development within a more sustainable international economic and political order. It cannot do both. It must be acknowledged that the arms race and development are in a competitive relationship, particularly in terms of resources but also in the vital dimension of attitudes and perceptions ..."

One of the most important contributions of the Experts Group study was to broaden the scope of the disarmament/development relationship to place it in the context of a triangular interaction between disarmament, development and security.

The Experts Study noted that the range of contemporary challenges to the security of nations is far broader than the military power of potential adversaries. In outlining some of the non-military challenges to security, the report pointed to:

- the scarcity of vital raw materials and commodities;
- the long-term effects of environmental degradation;
- the present inequality in the distribution of the world's wealth and opportunities.

Canada looks upon the conference as an opportunity to undertake a practical, in-depth examination of the questions raised in the disarmament/development relationship. For example;

- what resources are presently devoted to armaments;
- how has this spending affected development;
- what resources might be diverted from military spending;
- what would be the possible problems, costs and benefits of this diversion.

As well, Canada believes that the approach to the discussion must be a global one -- encompassing developing and developed countries, nuclear and conventional disarmament -- keeping security, in its broadest definition, as the touch-stone.

The raising of world-consciousness and recognition of the importance of the disarmament/development relationship during this, the International Year of Peace, will mark an important step in the right direction toward creating a peaceful world.

Canada is well placed to assist the international community in its first full and open discussion of the relationship between disarmament and development. As a developed country with a tradition of deep involvement with the developing world and as an active participant in all the multilateral arms control and disarmament forums, Canada will bring special expertise and sensitivities to the discussions.

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In addition to Canada's diverse ongoing work for peace, we will be undertaking a programme of activities designed to highlight the themes of International Year of Peace and to engage Canadians across the country in this special international year.

Canada's programme of activities will include:

- support of the U.N.'s International Year of Peace activities through a \$10,000 contribution to the IYP Voluntary Trust Fund which forms part of our overall \$100,000 commitment to the objectives of the U.N.'s World Disarmament Campaign.
- a cross-Canada tour and regional meetings of the Consultative Group on Disarmament and Arms Control Affairs by the Ambassador for Disarmament on the dual themes of IYP and the question of the relationship between disarmament and development;

- the preparation, in book form, of a selection of essays written by distinguished Canadians and dealing with the broad themes of IYP from their individual perspectives;
- a national essay competition on the theme "What is Peace and what can I do to achieve it" and a poster competition on the IYP which will be organized by the U.N. Association in Canada;
- the issuance of a commemorative stamp by Canada Post Corporation to mark IYP.

As well, other government departments will be undertaking their own programmes which are linked to the themes of IYP. For example, as part of its ongoing activities, the Department of National Defence will be highlighting the IYP in its publications, exhibitions and speaking tours. The role of the Canadian Armed Forces in contributing to peace and Canada's ongoing commitment to peacekeeping will be among the featured themes.

For many Canadians, the IYP proclamation confirmed what we had already known. It has served to remind us that peace without development is not peace, that peace without racial equality and harmony is not peace, that peace without a reasonable quality of life is not peace.

It is, therefore, the fullness of Canada's programmes -- from development assistance and active support for human rights to the protection of the environment and the promotion of a better standard of living for people across the country and, indeed, around the world -- that constitutes a meaningful contribution to peace.

The spirit, determination and commitment generated by IYP must be carried forward into the years ahead if we are to create a truly peaceful planet.

Canada and Canadians can use IYP as a catalyst in our ongoing work for peace. If we can infuse others with our hope and belief in true human security, we will have accomplished a great deal.