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# UNSSOD II and Canada

The Second  
United Nations Special Session  
on Disarmament  
May/June 1982



## A Canadian Perspective

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Dept. of External Affairs  
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## A Canadian Perspective

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# UNSSOD II AND CANADA

## INTRODUCTION

The first resolution passed at the first session of the United Nations General Assembly in January 1946 was concerned with the international control of atomic weapons. It established an Atomic Energy Commission, composed of members of the Security Council plus Canada, with instructions to prepare proposals for

- ensuring the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes only;
- the elimination of atomic and other weapons of mass destruction;
- a system of safeguards, including inspection, to prevent violations.

The Commission was unable to agree on proposals, and the world is still searching for ways of controlling nuclear weapons. But the principles set out in this resolution have guided all international efforts to find a solution.

The Charter of the United Nations authorizes the organization to deal with disarmament\*. Article 11 says that the General Assembly *"may consider the general principles of co-operation in the maintenance of international peace and security, including the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments"*, and Article 26 makes the Security Council responsible for formulating plans *"for the establishment of a system for the regulation of armaments."*

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\* The UN has traditionally used the word 'disarmament' to cover all questions relating to the control, regulation or destruction of armaments. The experts differentiate between 'disarmament', which is designed to reduce arms and armaments, and 'arms control', which is designed to control them either in terms of numbers, types or geographic areas. In the U.N., the term 'arms limitation' is used in lieu of 'arms control'.

Canada was included in this first negotiating body because of its experience as a wartime partner of the United States and Britain in atomic energy work. It has been a member of virtually every negotiating body ever since and has shown a keen interest in disarmament and arms control.

Canada also became the first country with the capability of making nuclear weapons to take the deliberate decision not to do so. The government's policy was announced to the House of Commons in December 1945.

The UN has not lived up to the expectations of its founding members as the principal organization to preserve international peace and security. When this became apparent, some groups of nations joined together in search of alternatives. One of the first was the North Atlantic Treaty (NATO), signed by Canada, the USA and some Western European nations. Later, the Warsaw Pact was signed by the nations of Eastern Europe. These developments have led to some arms control negotiations taking place outside the UN. The Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) have been bilateral, between the United States and the Soviet Union, the two superpowers with the major arsenals of inter-continental rockets. The Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR) negotiations have been between members of NATO and the Warsaw Pact. The existence of regional organizations has also affected the composition of the various UN committees and commissions which have been established for disarmament negotiations.

Initially, their membership was small, composed largely of those states with substantial armed forces. In theory, it should be easier to reach agreement in a smaller group, but progress was slow and other states began pressing for a voice. As a result, the negotiating body grew from five nations in 1954 (Britain, Canada, France, USA and USSR), to ten in 1959 (five from NATO, five from the Warsaw Pact), to 18 in 1962 (the same ten plus eight non-aligned nations), to 26 in 1969 (with the addition of two western, two socialist and four non-aligned states), to 40 in 1979 (the five nuclear-weapons states, 21 non-aligned, seven others from NATO and seven others from the Warsaw Pact).

The UN designated the 1970s as the Disarmament Decade. They featured:

1. **The Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)\*.** This is an attempt to stop the spread of nuclear weapons to more countries. In effect, the states with nuclear weapons undertook not to supply either the weapons or the weapons technology to countries not possessing them, but promised to share their knowledge of the peaceful applications of nuclear energy. They also agreed to negotiate effective measures for nuclear disarmament. Canada has taken its responsibilities under the Treaty seriously and has imposed stringent controls on the sale of uranium and of the CANDU nuclear reactor for generating electricity. The government has been willing to sacrifice commercial benefits in its effort to control the spread of nuclear weapons. However, not every nation sees the NPT this way. Some regard it as a form of discrimination.

2. **Bacteriological (Biological) Weapons (BW).** A convention banning the development, production and stockpiling of these weapons was opened for signature in 1972 and came into force in 1975. Those signing agreed to destroy any stockpiles they might have, and it is the first multilateral agreement providing for the actual destruction of existing stocks of weapons.

3. **Strategic Arms Limitation Talks.** The first agreement was signed in 1972, and it included a ban on the deployment of anti-ballistic missile missiles (ABMs). SALT II, signed in 1979, set numerical ceilings for inter-continental and submarine-launched ballistic missiles (ICBMs and SLBMs). SALT II has never been ratified. President Carter withdrew it from the Senate after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. SALT is a bilateral process between the USA and USSR and the agreements are binding only on them. If nuclear arms control is to be truly effective, the other nuclear weapon states – Britain, France and China – will have to be included.

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\* The NPT was opened for signature in 1968 and came into force in 1970.

## UNSSOD I

In 1978, the United Nations General Assembly held a Special Session on Disarmament, known from its initials as UNSSOD I, and it produced a remarkable Final Document. The 129 paragraphs contain an Introduction, a Declaration, a Programme of Action, and recommendations on the future machinery for disarmament negotiations. The most notable aspect of this Document is that it was approved by consensus, which means that none of the 149 member-states present was willing to express opposition. Some may have had reservations about some parts of it, but these were subordinated to what all agreed was more important, approval of a document which might be called a new charter for disarmament.

Reading the Final Document one can see that it is the work of many hands. There is a certain amount of repetition and an element of cut-and-paste, as if segments of various drafts had been incorporated in their entirety. Obviously, a good deal of horse-trading must have gone on. Yet it sets out at length and in considerable detail the reasons why disarmament is believed to be essential for the security and well-being of the world and how it might be achieved. The ultimate objective, of course, is general and complete disarmament, and the Programme of Action establishes these priorities for negotiations (para 45):

- nuclear weapons;
- other weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons;
- conventional weapons, including any which may be deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects;
- reduction of armed forces.

External Affairs Minister Mark MacGuigan followed this closely when he set out priorities for Canada soon after taking up his present office. They were:

1. *"...to encourage continuation of the SALT process.*
2. *"...to promote the realization of a comprehensive, multi-lateral treaty banning nuclear weapons tests.*

3. *"...a convention to completely prohibit chemical weapons.*
4. *"...the evolution of an effective non-proliferation regime based on the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).*
5. *"...limit and reduce conventional forces."* (from an address to World Federalists of Canada, Winnipeg, 13 June 1980.)

The Final Document states that agreements should provide for *"adequate measures of verification satisfactory to all parties concerned in order to create the necessary confidence and ensure that they are observed by all parties."* (para 31). In a disarmed world, states would be permitted to have *"only those non-nuclear forces, armaments, facilities and establishments as are agreed to be necessary to maintain internal order and protect the personal security of citizens and in order that States shall support and provide agreed manpower for a United Nations peace force."* (para 111).

## UNSSOD II

It was agreed that a Second Special Session on Disarmament (UNSSOD II) should be held, and this will take place in May and June 1982. A preparatory committee has been meeting, and it looks as if the main items of business will be:

- a review of how far the Programme of Action has been implemented;
- a review of how the new negotiating machinery is working;
- consideration of a comprehensive programme for disarmament;
- new initiatives and proposals;
- adoption of a declaration reaffirming commitment to the Final Document of UNSSOD I.

There will, of course, be a general debate in which a number of world leaders are likely to take part. Undoubtedly, many of them will express their disappointment that more has not been accomplished since 1978. A SALT II agreement was signed but not ratified, and at the time of writing there has been no decision on a further round of strategic arms

talks between the two superpowers. Negotiations for a comprehensive ban on nuclear weapons tests (CTB), and the prohibition of chemical and of radiological weapons have dragged on inconclusively. The only arms control agreement reached by the middle of 1981 concerned Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to have Indiscriminate Effects. The Treaty contains three protocols which provide for banning:

- incendiary attacks on cities and other areas of concentrated civilian population, even when they contain military targets;
- booby traps attached to the sick or wounded, food and drink, kitchen utensils and toys, and at grave sites and medical facilities;
- weapons that scatter fragments made of materials such as glass or plastic which do not show up on x-rays.

This is a very modest step in the context of overall disarmament. On the other hand, it shows that agreements can be reached even when the international situation is tense. Such events as the invasion of Afghanistan, the Polish crisis, the hostages at the US Embassy in Teheran, or the growing tensions between Israel and her Arab neighbours did not prevent a successful negotiation. Perhaps the pressures of UNSSOD II will lead to other positive achievements.

In the wake of UNSSOD I, a number of expert studies on various aspects of disarmament and the arms race have been commissioned. They should add to our knowledge and perhaps, provide new ideas as well.

## **POLITICAL BACKGROUND**

Of course, UNSSOD II will not take place in isolation, and its debates and results will be affected by the current international situation. While it is impossible to forecast exactly what factors will influence the session, these are obviously important:

1. Relations between the two superpowers. By May 1982, we should know whether they will continue the SALT process and whether they can limit the introduction of new

nuclear weapons in Europe. The Reagan administration has taken its time to formulate arms control policy and seems anxious to build up its military strength as a preliminary. Moscow has sounded more forthcoming, though it remains to be seen whether words will be matched by deeds. But the experience of arms negotiations makes one thing clear: there will be progress when the superpowers agree, and there is unlikely to be progress when they are at odds.

2. **The North-South dialogue.** The economic tensions between North and South, between the rich industrialized nations and the poorer developing nations, will be reflected in the UNSSOD II debates. There is an understandable tendency to argue that money spent on defence means less available for development. The relationship between disarmament and development will be examined in the report of a group of experts which will be submitted to the 36th session of the General Assembly in 1981.

3. **The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE).** The review meeting in Madrid dragged on into mid-summer when it recessed until October. One question to be decided is the possibility of a Conference on Disarmament in Europe (CDE), and affecting that is the desirability of balance in the final recommendations. In other words, should proposals involving human rights be included as well as confidence-building measures (CBMs)? The Polish crisis has always loomed in the background at Madrid, and anything that puts the CSCE process in jeopardy could have consequences outside Europe.

4. **The Middle East.** Always a potential flash point, this area seemed headed for one of its more dangerous crises as 1981 developed. Will the new government of Prime Minister Menachem Begin be more militant and uncompromising? Will Washington continue to supply Israel with military equipment? Will it impose tighter conditions? Will the Soviet Union commit itself more openly to the Arab cause, especially the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)? What will be the effect of Israel's pre-emptive attack on the nuclear reactor in Iraq?

5. **The international economic climate.** Continued high inflation, high interest rates, and high levels of unemployment will have their repercussions. They tend to make the industrialized nations look inwards, with protectionism and economic nationalism coming to the fore. Theoretically, one might expect governments to welcome a chance to cut defence spending, but past experience indicates this does not happen.

External Affairs Minister Mark MacGuigan has recognized the significance of these outside factors on the prospects for international security. He put it this way:

*"Nuclear war is neither imminent nor inevitable. But it cannot be ruled out. No power wants general war. But global politics reflect increasingly the strains to peace which derive from resource imbalances, population pressures and technological and cultural change."* (From an address to World Federalists of Canada, Winnipeg, 13 June 1980.)

## GROUPS AT THE UN

The UN, of course, is a political organization composed of 154 member states and based on *"the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members"*. (UN Charter, Article 2(1).) In practice, it operates through a series of groups. One series is based on geography and is concerned with such things as regional representation on committees. The other series is based on the common interests of its members and acts in the role of a political caucus. As had been the practice at UNSSOD I and during the Preparatory Committee of UNSSOD II, three of these caucuses met:

- a) **The Non-Aligned Group**, composed largely of nations from Africa, Asia and Latin America but including some others such as Yugoslavia.
- b) **The Socialist Group**, composed of countries with com-

minist governments, though China and Yugoslavia do not belong\*.

c) The Barton Group of Western and other like-minded nations, composed of the members of NATO, Australia, Ireland, Japan, New Zealand and Spain. Its name derives from the group's first convenor, William H. Barton, a former Canadian Permanent Representative to the UN.

As always, there are variations. At the Preparatory Committee session, Cuba and Ethiopia have attended meetings of both the non-aligned and socialist groups. The Nordic countries sometimes meet separately. Of the Barton group members, those in the European Community usually try to develop a common policy in advance.

These caucuses will function at UNSSOD II. Agreements on both procedure and substance will be negotiated between them. Each will be pressing for its special causes and particular interests. One can expect:

- the non-aligned group to advocate the transfer of money saved by cuts in defence spending to programmes of economic development and to continue to criticize Israeli and South African nuclear policies;
- the non-nuclear powers to press the states with nuclear weapons to begin real nuclear disarmament and to share their knowledge so that nuclear energy can be more widely used for peaceful purposes;
- the socialist group to press for acceptance of the proposals put forward by Secretary-General Leonid Brezhnev at the 26th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party in February 1981;
- the Western nations to insist on adequate verification of any disarmament or arms control measures;
- regional groupings to react for or against proposals that their corner of the world become a nuclear-free zone or a zone of peace;

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\* At the UN, these nations are officially referred to as 'socialist' rather than 'communist'.

- everyone to take the two superpowers to task for failing to live up to the commitments they made at UNSSOD I and, before that, in the NPT, and to tell them to provide greater leadership by setting a better example in disarmament.

## COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT

The Final Document of UNSSOD I sets out the consensus about the machinery needed to pursue arms control and disarmament. For maximum effectiveness, it states, two kinds of bodies are required, one deliberative and the other negotiating (para 113). The General Assembly should remain the main deliberative organ (para 115) and in future, its First Committee should deal "*only with questions of disarmament and related international security questions*" (para 117). A Disarmament Commission, composed of all UN members, should study in greater detail items discussed by the First Committee (para 118), and a Committee on Disarmament (CD) was created as the "*single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of limited size taking decisions on the basis of consensus*" (para 120).

As finally organized, the CD has 40 members. For the first time, all five nuclear-weapon states have agreed to take part. France had been absent from the previous committees since 1961, and the Peoples' Republic of China had not participated since being admitted to the UN in 1971. The other members are 21 non-aligned nations, seven others from NATO, and seven others from the Warsaw Pact. The CD was obviously designed as the principal forum for implementing the recommendations of UNSSOD I. It has been slow in getting going, but perhaps that is inevitable at a time when there is a lack of agreement between the superpowers. For some members, this intense involvement in disarmament is a new experience. Their desire to achieve real progress is as great as that of any nation, but they may not have the reservoir of experts, inside or outside government, to translate this concern into policy. Sometimes, the only people with a continuing knowledge of the subject are the staff members of the missions to the UN in New York and Geneva, and they are not backed up by think tanks or study groups at home, nor a strong network of

non-governmental organizations.

Thus, the first meetings of the CD were, in some cases, more educational than substantive. With the passage of time and the gaining of experience, that changes.

The CD established four working groups on the following topics:

- chemical weapons (CW);
- negative security assurances (NSA);
- radiological weapons (RW);
- comprehensive programme for disarmament (CPD).

Once these began working, the rhetoric tended to evaporate. In a general debate, there is a tendency to indulge in polemics, but the atmosphere changes when specific subjects are examined. Let us examine the four topics more closely.

## 1. Working Groups

a) **Chemical Weapons.** The USA and USSR have been negotiating a treaty to ban these weapons and destroy stockpiles since 1976. They have not succeeded, and a cynic would say that is because they have chemical weapons in their arsenals and because some strategists believe these would be an important advantage in war. One of the major stumbling blocks is how an agreement could be verified. This is difficult when a factory producing industrial chemicals could be converted to producing chemicals for weapons in a short period of time and with virtually no visible change to an outside observer. CW is an area where Canada can speak with authority because Canadian scientists are renowned for their knowledge of defensive measures, including the development of protective clothing and equipment.

b) **Negative Security Assurances.** So far, it has not been possible to eliminate nuclear weapons. Under these circumstances, can some way be found to avoid or prevent their use? Can the nuclear powers be persuaded to "*promise never to use these weapons?*" At UNSSOD I, all five nuclear weapons powers made unilateral pledges regarding the non-use of nuclear weapons. But so far, it has not proved possible

to set out these pledges in the form of an acceptable international treaty.

c) **Radiological weapons.** These are defined as devices designed to use radioactive material for destructive purposes, other than in nuclear explosives. They are not known to exist, but the USA and USSR worked together in drafting a treaty not to develop or produce such weapons. It was presented to the CD in 1979. The initial reaction was sceptical, with a touch of resentment at the superpowers for what amounted to a *fait accompli*. While the CD has not endorsed it at the time of writing, this may be one agreement that can be recommended to UNSSOD II.

d) **Comprehensive Program for Disarmament.** At its session in 1979, the General Assembly called on the CD to negotiate a CPD for presentation to UNSSOD II. This looked like an almost impossible assignment, but a great deal of drafting has been done. There are those who would like to see a very specific CPD, including dates by which certain steps should be taken. On the other hand, CD operates by consensus and it will be difficult to achieve this for anything as precise.

## 2. Additional Topics

The agenda for disarmament is much longer than these four topics. The full list will not have been considered in detail by the CD, but many are likely to be mentioned in the Committee's report to UNSSOD II. Draft agreements would obviously benefit from having the CD's endorsement. Among the subjects that are certain to be mentioned are:

a) **The SALT process.** Strategic arms limitation has been in a state of suspense while the Reagan administration worked out its policy. While parts of SALT I have officially expired and SALT II has never been ratified, the USA and USSR are both acting as if both agreements were in effect. It is obvious that progress towards further SALT agreements would have a positive effect on other disarmament negotiations.

b) **Comprehensive Test Ban.** Negotiations have been in progress between Britain, USA and USSR. The technical experts now agree that seismographs can differentiate between earthquakes and underground nuclear explosions except very small ones. It will be much more complicated to construct an international network of stations to detect explosions and report them. The nuclear weapon states want to continue testing because that is how they can develop new nuclear warheads and test existing ones. What is needed is an act of political will to stop improving their arsenals by these underground tests and to stop the technological progress which feeds the arms race. This is another area where Canada plays a key role. Canadian seismologists are respected throughout the world and have taken a major part in dealing with technical issues.

c) **Conventional weapons.** This is the modern description for any weapon that is not classified as a weapon of mass destruction (nuclear, radiological, chemical or biological). All wars since 1945 – there has been a seemingly endless series – have been conventional, and they have taken place outside Europe and North America. Many people believe that a very effective disarmament measure would be to control the transfer of conventional weapons to the developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. Such proposals have run into stiff opposition from some of the developing countries, who regard them as another form of discrimination. But the superpowers are also at fault. Between 1977 and 1979, they tried to negotiate an agreement and they failed, largely because each wanted to be free to continue supplying its friends and allies.

d) **Disarmament and Development.** The Final Document declares that "*the economic and social consequences of the arms race are so detrimental that its continuation is obviously incompatible with the implementation of the new international economic order, based on justice, equity and co-operation*" (para 16). There are pressures from the developing countries on the industrialized world to reduce its military spending, transferring the money saved to development projects. But there are no signs that this will really

happen – even if there were substantial reductions in arms spending.

e) **Outer space.** There are growing fears of a new arms race in space despite the Treaty of 1967 which bans stationing nuclear weapons in orbit around the earth. A particular concern is the development of weapons to destroy satellites. This could be a serious blow to arms control and disarmament because the controls depend so heavily on what are called national technical means of verification, which is a polite way of describing satellite photography and the interception of radio signals. The ability to destroy satellites would also undermine the concept of deterrence because satellites are important in providing warning of an impending attack.

f) **Confidence building measures (CBM).** These have come into prominence with the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), whose Final Act includes provisions for such things as the reporting of military manoeuvres and permission for observers to attend these exercises.

In the early stages of the Madrid CSCE Review Conference, France, with the concurrence of its NATO partners, indicated that if new CBMs were to be negotiated they would have to be militarily significant, binding, verifiable and applicable throughout the European continent from the Atlantic to the Urals. In early 1981 the Soviet Union proposed that CBMs be extended to include European Russia and an equivalent area of NATO territory, to include naval and air exercises, and to be negotiated for the Far East as well. Negotiations in Madrid will resume in late October. Also, the UN Secretary-General will submit to the 36th Session of the General Assembly in 1981, a UN study on CBM's conducted by an international panel of experts.

g) **Verification.** This has become an essential part of all disarmament measures. Nations no longer seem to trust each other's signature on a treaty but insist on some outside means of making sure that they abide by its terms. Satellite observations have overcome certain objections to on-site inspection,

though in some cases the experts say inspection is essential. In negotiating disarmament, the parties have to judge whether they can accept less than 100 per cent proof that it will be observed, and what means of verification they will accept.

One of Canada's major contributions to the CD's work has been the preparation of a series of papers on verification. The first was a compendium of proposals that had been put forward over the years. This has been followed by a quantification paper and by a conceptual analysis of the problem. These have been very well received. It remains to be seen how far they will lay the foundation for acceptable verification procedures in future disarmament and arms control agreements.

## CANADA'S CONTRIBUTION

What has been the Canadian contribution since UNSSOD I? Let us begin with the strategy of suffocation proposed by Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau at that session. He said he was particularly concerned about the *"technological impulse"* that lay behind the development of strategic weapons because it was *"in the laboratories that the nuclear arms race begins"*. He proposed four measures, designed to deprive this arms race *"of the oxygen on which it feeds"*:

1. *"A comprehensive test ban to impede the further development of nuclear explosive devices."* As we have seen, negotiations have been in progress for several years and apparently there have been no new developments since UNSSOD I.
2. *"An agreement to stop the flight-testing of all new strategic delivery vehicles."* Aside from provisions in SALT II, no formal proposals to this end have been put forward.
3. *"An agreement to prohibit all production of fissionable material for weapons purposes."* Canada has introduced a resolution on this for the past three years. Some critics have raised questions about the possibility of verification, and

there is an apparent lack of interest among both the nuclear and near-nuclear nations.

4. "An agreement to limit and then progressively to reduce military spending on new strategic nuclear weapons systems." This too has not happened.

Mr. Trudeau may well tell UNSSOD II of his disappointment that a concept which attracted wide attention, both public and professional, has achieved so little. The reason lies more in the international climate than in the actual measures, which are still valid. He spoke at a time when SALT II seemed a certainty, with further steps to follow. Those dreams have been dashed and arms control has been put on the back burner by many people.

At home, the Canadian government improved its own machinery. Shortly after UNSSOD I, it was announced that the post of Adviser on Disarmament and Arms Control Affairs was being revived, and Geoffrey Pearson, son of the late Prime Minister, was appointed to it. This position originated during the Diefenbaker years when it was held by Lt. Gen. E.L.M. Burns. This time, there was a difference. Burns was officially Adviser to the Government and had the right of direct access to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Pearson was simply Adviser and reported through the normal channels of the Department.

Yet this was an important step. Some money was made available for research projects. The Department of External Affairs established a consultative group of non-governmental organizations and inaugurated a semi-annual *Disarmament Bulletin*. In 1980, it was announced that a full-time Ambassador for Disarmament would be appointed and the post was filled by one of Canada's most experienced diplomats, Arthur Menzies. (Mr. Pearson was appointed Ambassador to the Soviet Union.)

Canada has, as always, played an active role both in the work of the CD and at the annual session of the General Assembly. For example, at the Assembly's 35th Session in 1980, 43 resolutions covering 20 distinct arms control and disarmament subjects were adopted. Canada was a co-sponsor of nine.

## CANADA'S AGENDA FOR UNSSOD II

UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim asked member-states to give him their views on the agenda for UNSSOD II. The Canadian reply, dated 8 April 1981, included the following:

*"Canada considers that the discussions in preparation for and at UNSSOD II should be as concrete and practical as possible and should respect certain principles and themes. Some of these should be the following:*

*a) Arms limitation and disarmament cannot be divorced from the wider political context; prescriptions which ignore the international situation are not useful;*

*b) arms limitation and security are inseparable; discussions which ignore states' security interests are also not useful;*

*c) the only secure route to progress in arms limitation is through specific and verifiable agreements which include those states at risk of military confrontation. Agreements which are merely declaratory in nature do not provide the assurance of real disarmament;*

*d) greater openness is necessary to make possible adequate verification of agreements. In the absence of agreements, greater openness is essential to build confidence among those attempting to negotiate agreements;*

*e) nuclear weapon states bear a special responsibility to negotiate both quantitative and qualitative limits on these weapons. In this regard, reference should be made to the measures envisaged in paragraph 50 of the Final Document;*

*f) notwithstanding this special responsibility, efforts should be increased to reduce levels of conventional armaments, using the regional approach as the one most likely to produce results.*

*"Canada hopes that UNSSOD II will give highest priority*

*to the following issues:*

- a) continuation of the SALT process;*
- b) conclusion of a multilateral Comprehensive Test Ban treaty;*
- c) conclusion of an agreement on the prohibition of chemical weapons and on their destruction;*
- d) the evolution of an effective non-proliferation regime based on the Non-Proliferation Treaty; and*
- e) the promotion of concrete measures to limit and reduce conventional forces."*

If UNSSOD II can lead to a resolution of these five issues, it will have taken a giant step forward in the cause of disarmament. But will the whole effort be jeopardized by seemingly distant events — by another Afghanistan or another war in the Middle East? Or will we find that just as SALT I was negotiated while war raged in Vietnam, the world is determined to move in the direction of peace and good will, with appropriate safeguards and verification? Will we find ourselves hostages to a fortune over which we have no control? Or masters of our fate to greater extent than we ever dreamed?

## SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

Set out below are a series of questions to stimulate discussion. You will see that it is not an examination paper on disarmament and arms control, and there are very few "yes" or "no" answers. Almost every issue resolves itself into a matter of priorities, of judgments, of an assessment of the risks taken by arms control measures and the risks taken by not controlling arms. Some of the questions have been raised in the background paper; others have not. And to all of them, what questions would you add?

### DISARMAMENT NEGOTIATIONS SINCE 1945

1. Why have international negotiations for disarmament been handled by the United Nations?
2. Is the UN the most suitable forum?  
the most efficient forum?  
the best of an unattractive series of alternatives?
3. Have negotiations been more successful when handled by smaller groups?  
Are the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) an example to follow because they involve only two nations?
4. Why has Canada been involved since the beginning?  
What has been our special contribution?
5. What are the chief obstacles to disarmament agreements:  
National pride?  
Lack of trust?  
Absence of an international security system?  
Technological developments and new weapons?
6. Is it possible to verify compliance with disarmament agreements?  
— completely?  
— partially?

Should we be prepared to settle for less than perfection?  
How much less?

7. Is it wise for one country to announce that it will take certain disarmament measures by itself?  
Are such unilateral steps practical?  
Will they persuade others to follow your example?  
Would you recommend them for Canada?
8. Are disarmament and arms control agreements more effective if based on geographic regions? (Antarctica, outer space)  
types of weapons?(chemical weapons, cruise missiles)  
missions of armed forces? (anti-ballistic missile missiles, anti-submarine warfare)

#### THE FINAL DOCUMENT OF UNSSOD I

1. Does the Final Document represent a real consensus, or does it paper over serious differences of opinion?
2. How realistic is it – wholly?  
partially?  
quite unrealistic?
3. Why has there been so little progress in disarmament since UNSSOD I?  
Is it the fault of the Final Document?  
the superpowers?  
the Third World?  
the communists?
4. Has the Committee on Disarmament established by UNSSOD I been an effective body?  
Does it need more time to prove itself?  
How does its record compare with that of other negotiating groups?
5. Are the priorities set out in paragraph 45 sound?  
Would you rearrange them?  
What would you add to them?

6. How can Canada help implement the Final Document more effectively?
7. Should the Final Document be rewritten by UNSSOD II? If so, what are your suggestions?

## IMPLICATIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

1. Will UNSSOD II be affected by the state of relations between the United States and the Soviet Union?  
How?
2. What is the future of SALT?  
Does it have a future?  
What are the alternatives?
3. How is UNSSOD II likely to be affected by outside factors such as:  
Afghanistan?  
Poland?  
Lebanon?  
El Salvador?  
the CSCE?  
the energy crisis?  
interest rates and inflation?  
relations between the industrialized and developing countries, or the North-South dialogue?  
the development of new weapons?  
Or will UNSSOD II proceed regardless of what happens in the world?
4. What would be the repercussions of another country becoming a nuclear power, with clear evidence that it has developed its own nuclear weapons?
5. Will UNSSOD II be affected by international acts of terrorism?  
Will the session take steps to control such acts?  
Could it prevent nuclear terrorism?

## **BASIC POSITIONS OF DIFFERENT GROUPS**

1. What are the major disarmament interests of:
  - the United States?
  - the Soviet Union?
  - the non-aligned nations?
  - the developing nations?
  - the states with nuclear weapons?
  - the states generally regarded as on the threshold of nuclear weapons?
  - the non-nuclear weapon states?
  
2. Do states in the same geographic region (e.g. the Caribbean, South-East Asia) have common disarmament interests?
  - Do they have more in common because of geographic proximity than for other reasons?
  - Is regional disarmament a practical policy?
  - Is disarmament more likely to succeed in some regions than in others?
  
3. Does Europe have a special place in disarmament negotiations?
  - Why have negotiations for Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR) dragged on with so little evidence of success?
  
4. What common disarmament interests can be found between the different groups of nations?
  - How can these be translated into practical steps and international agreements?
  - Are there insuperable obstacles (such as ideological beliefs, economic development) to disarmament agreements between these groups?
  
5. Should greater attention be paid to confidence building measures?
  
6. Is it a good thing for United Nations meetings to operate on the basis of negotiations between groups of nations?
  - Is there an alternative?

## CANADA'S PRIORITIES

1. Do you agree with the priorities set out by External Affairs Minister Mark MacGuigan?  
How would you state them?
2. What should we do to press for implementation of Prime Minister Trudeau's strategy of suffocation?
3. Are there differences of opinion about Canada's disarmament policies between different government departments in Ottawa?  
Between External Affairs and National Defence?  
and Industry, Trade and Commerce?  
and Energy, Mines and Resources?  
Are such differences within the bureaucracy a natural state of affairs?
4. How far can Canada press its more powerful allies such as the United States?  
In what directions?  
Should we be prepared to criticize them publicly in an international arena such as the United Nations?
5. Should our priorities be based primarily on  
our national interests?  
our international responsibilities?  
our expertise in the subject?  
our ideals?  
How would you combine, or balance these?
6. What can be done to stimulate a greater public interest in and awareness of the issues coming up at UNSSOD II?

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This booklet was developed by Mr. Robert Reford at the invitation of the Department of External Affairs. Mr. Reford is co-convener of the Canadian Study Group on Arms Control and Disarmament. He lives in Toronto, where he is President of the Reford-McCandless International Consultants Corporation. He was Executive Director of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs from 1971-78. The views expressed in this booklet are his own.

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