

# Statement

Secretary of  
State for  
External Affairs



# Déclaration

Secrétaire  
d'État aux  
Affaires  
extérieures

**91/27**

**CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

## **NOTES FOR AN ADDRESS**

**BY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA MCDOUGALL,  
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,  
ON AMENDMENTS**

**TO THE EXPORT AND IMPORT PERMITS ACT**

**OTTAWA, Ontario  
MAY 30, 1991**

I rise to join the debate on Bill C-6 with a particular purpose in mind, and that is to respond to the suggestions of those Honourable Members who suggest that the proposed amendments to the Export and Import Permits Act (EIPA) are inconsistent with the arms control proposals made in February by the Prime Minister and Mr. Clark. No such inconsistency exists.

Under the proposed amendments, exports of automatic weapons will be subject to the same stringent controls that have long been applied to the export of other military goods from Canada. These controls fully reflect Canada's arms control and disarmament policies.

They are, in fact, driven by Canada's security policy, of which arms control and disarmament are major components. They allow, and have always allowed, the export of particular types of military equipment to particular countries under particular circumstances.

At the same time, they ensure, and will continue to ensure, that Canada does not contribute to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction or to excessive build-ups of conventional arms.

What Canada proposed in February was that countries learn from the Gulf War, namely, that proliferation and excessive arms build-ups are destabilizing and dangerous and must be stopped.

We put forward a range of proposals aimed at mobilizing the political will and the mechanisms necessary to minimize these dangers in the future in the Middle East and elsewhere.

We proposed expanding and strengthening existing regimes to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

We also proposed measures to promote international transparency, consultations and restraint with a view to preventing excessive build-ups of conventional arms. By excessive build-ups of conventional arms, we mean the acquisition of quantities of conventional arms that go beyond legitimate defence requirements.

As my predecessor made very clear before a committee of this House in March, we are not proposing to put an end to the arms trade per se. Nor are we proposing to constrain any country's ability to acquire arms for legitimate defence purposes. We have never suggested that defence needs should be left unmet.

What we are proposing is that the international community should take appropriate measures to ensure that states will not in future be allowed to overarm themselves as Iraq did.

Since the question of arms control is fundamental to this debate, I believe it would be instructive to review the actions Canada has taken to date to follow up on our initiative.

On chemical weapons, we have played a prominent role in seeking to overcome the remaining hurdles in the Geneva negotiations on a global and comprehensive convention banning the development, production, stockpiling and use of such weapons.

We loudly applaud President Bush's commitment that the United States will be an original signatory of the convention and will destroy all its stocks of chemical weapons. We are working actively with the U.S. and other allies to ensure that the negotiations reach a successful conclusion next year.

In the interim, we have recently instituted strict controls on all 50 chemicals that are considered precursors for chemical weapons, and are exploring with other countries ways of controlling the export of so-called "dual-use" technology.

In the area of biological weapons, we have been preparing actively and intensively for the third Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention, which will be held in Geneva in September. We are calling on parties to arrive at compliance measures for this Convention, which outlaws biological weapons, and we have put forward proposals towards this end.

In seeking to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, we are energetically continuing our efforts to lobby all parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty to lend their support to the indefinite extension of this vital Treaty when it comes up for renewal in 1995.

In addition, we continue our efforts to curtail the proliferation of means of delivery for such weapons.

Canada met in March with its partners in the Missile Technology Control Regime and will be meeting with them again later this year to consider expanding participation in the Regime to include such countries as the Soviet Union, and to look at broadening the scope of the Regime to include more categories of missiles.

On conventional weapons, we are calling for early action to establish a global system of exchanging information about arms transfers. We are urging all countries to take immediate efforts to implement the recommendations likely to be forthcoming from the UN experts group now studying arms transfer transparency.

Not content to wait for the international community to move in this direction, Canada has taken the lead in promoting transparency by publishing, under my predecessor's authority, the first annual report of exports of military goods from Canada. We are also proposing the establishment of an appropriate forum for consultations about situations where excessive conventional arms build-ups seem to be developing.

We hope that the result of these processes of increased transparency and international consultation will be the encouragement of countries to exercise self-restraint in the transfer and acquisition of weapons that might contribute to excessive build-ups.

We intend to continue to pursue these objectives across a wide range of fora. This coming weekend I will be travelling to Santiago to participate in the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS), where Canada will be calling for action in pursuit of the aims I have just described, including examination of ways to curb excessive build-ups of conventional arms.

I will be seeking a commitment to similar goals at the NATO Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Copenhagen next week and at the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Berlin later in June.

In addition, when we meet with our partners in the Group of Seven industrialized countries in July, we will be examining the possibility of collectively taking measures to enhance world stability and security through reducing weapons' proliferation.

In February, this Government made a commitment to work to diminish the likelihood and risks of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and excessive build-ups of conventional arms. That commitment remains strong and, as I have explained, is in no way diminished by or inconsistent with the proposed amendments to the Export and Import Permits Act.

The EIPA is the main legal instrument under which the Government controls exports and imports. The Act provides for control of exports on the basis of product using the Export Control List, and on the basis of destination using the Area Control List.

Goods and technologies may be placed on the Export Control List for a number of reasons, including the protection of the security of Canada and its allies. The majority of items are on the List to fulfil international commitments to control the proliferation of arms and to deny potential adversaries access to industrial goods that might have a military or strategic application.

These commitments have been made in the context of the Australia group, the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Co-ordinating Committee for Multilateral Strategic Export Controls.

In addition, export permits are required for all exports to countries on the Area Control List, regardless of whether the particular goods or technologies are listed on the Export Control List.

Canadian export controls are among the most restrictive of all Western countries, particularly with respect to the transfer of arms.

A standard review process exists for the proposed export of military equipment to any destination, except to members of the NATO alliance and a handful of other countries, including Australia, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Sweden and Switzerland.

All proposals to export military goods or technology to a country aside from those just noted are reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Departments of National Defence and Industry, Science and Technology, as well as extensively within External Affairs and International Trade Canada.

The export of offensive military equipment requires my own personal review and approval. The export of non-offensive military equipment requires my review and approval if the country of destination is engaged in or is under imminent threat of hostilities, has a record of human rights abuses, is under United Nations sanctions, or is deemed to be a threat to Canada and its allies.

These amendments do not affect this review process, which remains in place and in fact will be extended to cover any proposal to export automatic firearms. All other controls provided for under the Export and Import Permit Act remain unchanged.

In conclusion, as Secretary of State for External Affairs, I am responsible for developing and implementing Canada's arms control and disarmament policies. I am also responsible for issuing permits under the Export and Import Permits Act.

I will continue to ensure that all of our military exports -- including any as a result of the proposed amendments to the Act -- are fully consistent with our arms control and disarmament policies and do not contribute to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction or to excessive build-ups of conventional arms.