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86/54

Statement by the
Right Honourable Joe Clark,
Secretary of State for
External Affairs, on the
Summit Preparatory Meeting
at Reykjavik

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

October 13, 1986.

Canada and its NATO allies received a detailed and complete report from the Secretary Shultz of considerable progress at Reykjavik. We share NATO's determination to build on the potential of the week-end meeting. We are particularly encouraged by the movement made by the USA and the Soviet Union towards: (a) the agreement on a formula for achieving fifty percent reduction of strategic offensive forces; (b) the agreement to reduce intermediate nuclear forces in Europe and Asia, including detailed proposals on an adequate verification regime; (c) positive discussions on human rights.

We are pleased by USA's decision to have its negotiators return to Geneva with instructions to build on the important consensus that emerged in Reykjavik. We hope there will be a similar disposition on the Soviet side.

For our part we will be continuing our work in all multilateral forums dealing with conventional forces, a chemical weapons ban, verification techniques and other aspects of arms control.

In Iceland, superpowers were unable to agree on a clarification of obligations under the Anti-Ballistic Missiles (ABM) Treaty. That disagreement reflects their different views on the relationship between offensive and defensive systems. We welcome the USA's proposal for non-withdrawal from the ABM Treaty for 10 years, in parallel with a progressive reduction of strategic offensive forces.

Since the Geneva Summit, President Reagan and the General Secretary Gorbachev have changed dramatically the atmosphere of pessimism about the progress on arms control. In a field so complex, movement comes slowly, and we believe the Reykjavik meeting will mark another important step towards the kind of practical agreement we all seek.