Intervention by Canada during Thematic Debate on Disarmament Education  
October 21, 2005

Thank you, Chair.

I’d like to briefly speak about Canada’s activities in the field of disarmament education. Canada has long supported the contribution of civil society, academics and non-governmental organizations to broadening our understanding of disarmament and non-proliferation challenges and to the promotion of our objectives in the NACD field. Disarmament education is thus a key dimension of our broader efforts in this area. In recognition of the depth of knowledge and expertise in the Canadian academic and NGO community, Foreign Affairs Canada hosts annual consultations with civil society covering a range of topics, such as nuclear challenges and new non-proliferation mechanisms, missile proliferation, controls and defences, chemical and biological weapons, verification and compliance issues, the global partnership program and space security. Our delegations to the recent Preparatory Committees and Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty have all included civil society representatives. Canada provides funding to NGOs to convene expert-level consultations, and supports efforts of Reaching Critical Will to ensure wide public access to national statements and other documents emanating from meetings of UN disarmament bodies.

The International Security Research and Outreach Program of Foreign Affairs Canada serves as a focal point in Canada for original research and assessment relevant to international security issues, including non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament, verification and confidence-building measures. The Programme draws together in-house capability, resources from other government departments and a network of expertise from the academic community and other knowledgeable individuals in Canada and abroad. As part of its outreach activities, in March 2005, ISROP helped establish the Canadian Centre for Treaty Compliance at Carleton University in Ottawa. The Centre’s initial focus will be on arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation treaties concerned with weapons of mass destruction. In addition to courses, researchers at the Centre will examine how treaty compliance is monitored and verified and the methods for encouraging, facilitating and enforcing compliance. The Centre will provide academic support for one of Canada’s stated foreign policy objectives - verified compliance with legal regimes designed to reduce the threats associated with WMD. Another significant ISROP initiative over the last year was the launch of international security internships aimed at providing graduate level students in international affairs with the opportunity to conduct substantive work on particular ISROP research priorities.

Canada supports independent graduate-level research through several Doctoral and Masters-level research awards, offered in collaboration with the Simons Centre for Peace and Disarmament Studies at the University of British Columbia. The primary objective of these awards is to enhance Canadian graduate level scholarship on disarmament and non-proliferation issues, and promote the development of centres of excellence in this area.
Most recently, in partnership with the United Nations Association of Canada, my Government has sponsored the production of a disarmament education module intended for students and teachers at the secondary school level. Teaching materials can be viewed at www.unac.org. The module has been well received both by students and by educators and has been well integrated into the broader provincial and territorial curriculums, with a focus on teachers in training.

Thank you, Chair