



CANADA

The Permanent Mission of Canada
to the United Nations
at Geneva

La Mission permanente du Canada
auprès des Nations Unies
à Genève

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NOTES FOR AN ADDRESS
BY
THE HONOURABLE BILL GRAHAM
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
TO
THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

Geneva, 16 March 2004

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NOTES POUR UNE ALLOCUTION
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L'HONORABLE BILL GRAHAM
MINISTRE DES AFFAIRES ÉTRANGÈRES
À
LA CONFÉRENCE DU DÉSARMEMENT

Genève, 16 mars 2004

Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General, ladies and gentlemen,

A few weeks ago, I held discussions with seven young Canadian scholars doing graduate work on the issues which concern us here today. From small arms to outer space, their research areas covered many of the key non-proliferation and disarmament challenges facing the international community. In meeting them, I was reminded of the importance of our work here for the next generation, and of our collective responsibility to them to make progress on the issues before us. To be sure, unknown dangers will face the next generation; but here in our own time we know the dangers before us and we know what we must do: to overcome our differences and work out a robust multilateral security framework, grounded in international law and monitored by effective compliance and verification mechanisms. The students I met with expressed dismay at the slow progress being made toward that goal, and I must say I could only share their dismay.

As Canada's foreign minister, and previously as Chair of the Canadian Parliament's Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, I have worked on these issues for the better part of a decade. During this time, I have closely followed the global non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament agenda and the work of the Conference on Disarmament. When I had the honour to speak to this forum two years ago, I spoke candidly, and I will do the same here today. The importance of the Conference and the issues before us demands nothing less.

This Conference is unique in being the only permanent multilateral forum for negotiating arms control and disarmament instruments. In establishing it, the international community demonstrated a clear commitment to binding, legal mechanisms to end proliferation and ensure disarmament.

Less than a decade ago, the Conference's actions reflected this collective will to tackle important issues head-on. Both the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty came to fruition in this forum. Yet for many years now, we have been unable even to agree on a Program of Work. Negotiations towards a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty, consideration of pressing nuclear disarmament issues, discussions on options to prevent an arms race in outer space, and negotiation of negative security assurances – all of these urgent projects have been held hostage to a stalemate between a handful of members.

The stakes of continued inaction are high for us all. Since the Conference last agreed on a Program of Work, the security environment has grown vastly more complex. The ownership and control of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems used to be confined to States; but as we now know, there are now non-state actors with access to sophisticated weapons, an interest in acquiring WMD and the clear intent to use these weapons.

There is also evidence that some of the gains we made through decades of hard work are unravelling. Two years ago, I said here that some countries were trying to hide behind multilateral processes and principles of fairness and non-discrimination to cover up their pursuit of weapons of mass destruction. We have recently witnessed revelations of a large network of nuclear traffickers whose client list included States parties to the NPT. The international community must now come to terms with clear evidence that the cornerstone of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime is threatened, both from within and from without.

Against this backdrop, it is more important than ever that the Conference approve a Program of Work and get back to business. The Five Ambassadors' Proposal already on the table is

reasonable and widely supported, and I urge all of you here to support it as the basis for an agreed Program of Work. Last month I wrote to my G8 colleagues calling on them to share my concerns and to invite them to muster the political will to break the Conference on Disarmament deadlock. Today, it is appropriate that I call upon all of you here to do so as well.

Colleagues, let me remind you why the international environment urgently demands our creativity and commitment. The plain fact is that proliferation that we are now witnessing is undermining our collective security and shaking the foundations of the international legal treaty regime. For the first time in its 35-year history, a state has renounced the Non-Proliferation Treaty. North Korea's actions are a threat to both its immediate neighbours and the international community at large; and our collective response must be unequivocal and direct lest the wrong lessons be drawn by other proliferators.

And of course there are other proliferators out there. As we recently learned, Libya's efforts to amass the technology and material for a nuclear weapons development program were far more advanced than we had suspected. Without excusing this NPT State Party from not having respected its treaty commitments, Libya nonetheless does deserve commendation for having realized that these activities were not contributing to its real security and for having taken the decision to dismantle its nuclear and chemical weapons and missile programs.

As for Iran, another State Party to the NPT, its nuclear intentions continue to remain unclear. Last year, in response to international scrutiny, Iran admitted to having an extensive program of undeclared nuclear activities dating back nearly 20 years – activities that should have been reported to the International Atomic Energy Agency and subject to Agency safeguards. The IAEA's report of February 24th points to serious outstanding discrepancies and unanswered questions. And since, the statements emanating by this government have been ambiguous, and there are still many questions concerning its future intentions.

And we also know that Pakistani nuclear scientists sold nuclear weapons know-how to other nations for many years. This situation requires full cooperation between the international community and the Government of Pakistan, to obtain the details of these transfers and uncover the full extent of the multinational network involved.

The fact that determined proliferators were able to circumvent their treaty obligations so easily highlights the extent to which it is urgent to reinforce compliance and verification mechanisms. In some areas no such mechanism even exists – for example the case of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. The time has surely come to recognize that most of the verification and compliance tools that do exist were designed to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction during the Cold War, and they must be adapted to today's new security environment. We must strengthen state-to-state compliance and verification mechanisms across the board, and ensure their effectiveness in preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-state actors. We also need to strengthen the existing multilateral treaty framework with new instruments and tools, and to increase the capabilities of the UN as well. I assure you that Canada will be contributing to these efforts on many fronts.

In this respect, I flag the enhanced support we'll be giving to the International Atomic Energy Agency. Its Director General has put forward some interesting ideas on the nuclear fuel cycle,

and Canada will be looking at these proposals and working with all the authorities involved to promote more such realistic initiatives.

All of us here should be encouraged that the international community is considering new ways of addressing proliferation threats. The EU's strategy on WMD, President Bush's address last month, and Foreign Secretary Straw's recent speech -- all of these demonstrate the concerted political will being mobilized to address proliferation. They also show that there is room for diverse approaches. Joint efforts by like-minded countries are, in the end, no substitute for the Conference on Disarmament and legally-binding treaties; but they sometimes become necessary when no other way of taking action on pressing issues can be found. And they can be effective parts of a comprehensive non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament system.

One such initiative is the Proliferation Security Initiative, aimed at blocking traffic in missiles and weapons of mass destruction. At its 5th plenary meeting in Lisbon earlier this month, PSI participants reaffirmed their determination to respond effectively to the proliferation and trafficking of WMD, their delivery systems and related materials. The Initiative has already been successful in raising international awareness and in fostering international co-operation. Canada is committed to the PSI Principles, and we are also committed to ensuring that any PSI activity in which we participate will be fully consistent with international law and our own national legal authorities. We intend to host a meeting of PSI operational experts in Ottawa next month.

Another of the steps Canada is taking with like-minded partners is the G8 Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, which was launched at Kananaskis in 2002. Under our leadership, G8 governments and others have committed to raise up to 20 billion US dollars to promote disarmament and non-proliferation, initially in Russia, to prevent the terrorist acquisition of WMD. Canada is providing up to 1 billion dollars Canadian over the next ten years, which will help destroy Russia's stockpile of chemical weapons, dispose of its weapons grade nuclear material, dismantle its decommissioned nuclear submarines, and employ former weapons scientists. In light of this initiative's success in Russia, President Bush recently proposed that the Partnership be expanded to other regions facing significant proliferation threats.

These practical efforts are important disarmament measures that complement the international community's work on non-proliferation. We all know, however, that for non-proliferation to succeed over the long term, it is critical to address the underlying motivations for the acquisition of missiles and WMD. Without progress towards nuclear disarmament, it will be very difficult to keep non-nuclear countries from seeing nuclear weapons as a deterrence or even to obtain political prestige. Above all, we must keep in mind the ultimate goal of completely eliminating nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, a goal shared by all of humanity.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is a virtually universal legal instrument with provisions covering the inter-twined goals of non-proliferation, disarmament, and peaceful use. As we prepare for the 2005 NPT Review Conference, Canada will be pressing hard to encourage all states to be faithful to the bargain they made in 1995, a bargain premised upon permanence with accountability. We will encourage states to demonstrate fidelity in deeds and not just words to Article VI, to reinforce the linkages between Articles III and IV, and to improve the Treaty's functioning and implementation. A return to work by the Conference on Disarmament would,

I believe, have a profoundly positive impact on the NPT review process.

The success of the NPT in stopping the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons ultimately depends on the effectiveness of verification provisions in Article III. Support for the safeguards system strengthened by the IAEA is the measuring stick for gauging that effectiveness. Some may wish to differ, but Canada and others view the comprehensive safeguards agreement and the Additional Protocol as part of the commitment undertaken by all non-nuclear weapon States parties to the NPT.

I have to regret, in this regard, that nearly seven years after the approval of the Model Additional Protocol, only 39 countries have brought Additional Protocols into force. Forty-six NPT States parties have not even concluded safeguards agreements. Canada is committed to working with the Agency and with other nations to encourage universal adherence to safeguards agreements and Additional Protocols.

We will continue to press for the implementation of the NPT's 13 practical steps on disarmament, agreed by consensus at the 2000 Review Conference. Among these inter-linked steps is a call for the Conference on Disarmament to negotiate a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty. To date this process has not yet been re-started, despite an agreed negotiating mandate and the acknowledged importance we all attach to the ban of the production of fissile materials. Why should the start of such formal talks, such a small step forward, remain so difficult? I must say I find that hard to understand. After all, under the rule of consensus, states cannot be forced to accept a result they consider inimical to their national security. And unless we begin talks, we will never know what ingenious and mutually beneficial solutions our negotiators might discover.

Another disarmament measure Canada supports is an early entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Late last year, I wrote to all of my counterparts in states which had not yet ratified the CTBT, urging them to complete this important unfinished business.

Finally, I would like to mention a fundamental Canadian goal, namely a treaty to ban space-based weapons. It would be an eminently sensible part of a CD work program to establish an *ad hoc* committee to begin discussing, without any preconditions, how the international community can keep outer space weapons-free. Surely it is in the interests of all countries to recognize the importance of a weapons-free outer space for our collective security. So too would be discussion of the benefits we all would gain by finding ways of guaranteeing peaceful uses of outer space; for as we know, the growing global public goods provided by communication, navigation and remote sensing satellites are now central to all our economies.

Canadian thinking on outer space has evolved. We remain firmly opposed to the deployment of weapons in space. Yet we also recognize the need to ensure the safety of satellites vital to our security and prosperity. We have therefore developed a new comprehensive approach seeking to integrate space security issues with the international community's need for secure and equitable access to space for peaceful purposes. On March 25th and 26th, this approach will be introduced at a seminar entitled "Safeguarding Space for All", sponsored by the UN Institute for Disarmament Research as well as key NGOs and the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs. I hope that many of you here today can attend that event.

Let me conclude by reaffirming Canada's view that the architecture of non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament is an indispensable pillar of national security for our own country and all others. Global security is certainly enhanced by absolute prohibitions on chemical and biological weapons. Despite its recent set-backs, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty has curtailed the spread of nuclear weapons and articulated an international commitment to their total elimination. And the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty will lessen the risk that nuclear weapons will be tested, and thereafter deployed.

To be sure, inaction at this Conference is cause for grave concern, but we must remind ourselves that even recently we have found areas for cooperation, such as the negotiations concluded on a Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War. Outside this forum, we can look forward to the upcoming Nairobi Summit on a Mine-Free World, where we can sustain the progress made in the global fight against landmines since the Ottawa Convention was opened in 1997. Canada welcomes new commitments to humanitarian mine action programs, such as the increased financial commitment recently announced by the United States, and we will continue working with our American colleagues to encourage them to adopt policies consistent with the international standard set by the Ottawa Convention.

In conclusion, colleagues, I would like to cite the words of the Canadian Prime Minister, Paul Martin. In a speech at Davos last month, he stressed that "No one nation can manage the consequences of interdependence on its own... We need multilateral institutions that work". The Conference on Disarmament has deficiencies, but its history demonstrates that it can function to address pressing security needs for the benefit of all of our citizens. What is needed is the political will to get back to our work. I appeal to all of you, and to the governments you represent: let us waste time no longer. Let us put divisions behind us, and rise to the challenges we face. There are younger generations we are accountable to, and only in constructive action can we fulfill the responsibilities we carry to make their lives and their futures more secure.

Thank you.