

# FOREIGN AFFAIRS CANADA

## Policy Position Paper

### Topic: NON-PROLIFERATION, ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT

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#### LEADING A PROPOSAL TO ACHIEVE NUCLEAR POWER BALANCE WITHIN A MULTILATERAL APPROACH

According to Canada's International Policy Statement "security in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is a common interest and a shared responsibility". Therefore, multilateralism as a way of acting inside the international scenario constitutes the base of the Canadian Foreign Policy. The point is that "multilateral constraint on the development, production, proliferation and use of weapons of war are accepted by states and civil society on the understanding that such constraint makes a concrete contribution to their peace and security objectives"<sup>1</sup>.

Before introducing our proposals, it is important and basic to Canada to take into account several requirements:

- Concerted international action: because "proliferation poses a global challenge it requires a collective international response". ([www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca](http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca))
- New legal and legitimate mechanisms to facilitate the identification of weapons in other countries without invading their sovereignty.
- Knowing that the multilateral system is not perfect: It needs to be strengthened, to create a more effective multilateralism to enhance Canadian security.
- More real compromises from those countries who give assistance to other countries.

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<sup>1</sup> Multilateral regimes will continue to form a critical foundation for threat reduction efforts for the foreseeable future and provide critical political and legal legitimacy for efforts to reduce the availability and utility of weapons and materials of mass destruction. ([www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca](http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca))

Having those issues in mind, we wish to draw attention to those states currently outside of the regime of nuclear non-proliferation, because according to Canada's international policy statement "a number of countries remain outside of the treaty, and several of them have shared nuclear material", such as India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea.

In order to analyze these situations is important to outline the Treaty. "The legal and political foundation of Canada's multilateral nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts remains in the **Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)**". (www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca). It is the "most effective international instrument to achieve Canada's fundamental objectives of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and to ensure peaceful, non-explosive uses of nuclear energy"<sup>2</sup>. (www.international.gc.ca)

There's no doubt that the state of the world right now is confronting east and west since the terrorist strikes of 9/11, and with the wars in Lebanon, Iraq, Afghanistan and the allegations regarding Iran, the tensions have unarguably increased. The USA claims will not be seen as fair within the group of Middle East countries, because they could easily accuse USA of playing a two handed role since for instance they claim for no nuclear proliferation, but still has a program of nuclear cooperation with the countries of the NATO, accuses Iran of developing a nuclear program but has not stopped Israel from developing this technology.

Within this context we worked on our proposal. It stands that members of the UN Security Council should collaborate by focusing on the specific need of each state of proliferation; this means that rich countries must concentrate efforts on:

- Technical and technological assistance
- Economic rehabilitation
- Fomentation of long term loans with soft credits
- Enhancing quality of life of the citizens

There are "only 5 Nuclear weapon states (NWS) that are allowed by the treaty to have nuclear weapons: USA, China, France, Russia and the UK, which are permanent members of the United Nations Security Council" (United Nations). Israel alleges that there are no moral reasons to conceive that only these 5 countries may have this condition and therefore they are unwilling to sign the treaty.

The parties of the UN security council are in different ways associated as a single group that could not individually reach approaches without USA acceptance, but on the other hand, Canada is viewed internationally as an important and independent allied to the USA but with an autonomy from the UN

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<sup>2</sup> NPT firmly believes that future global stability and security depend on the implementation by the international community of all the obligations of the Treaty.

Security Council (for not being a country allowed to have nuclear weapons). That may grant them with moral authority to persuade those countries (India, Pakistan, Israel and DPRK) and lead them into a coalition that would seek to align them within the NPT.

### **Landmines' problem**

Putting aside the problem of nuclear proliferation, we have arrived at the problem of landmines, another topic important to evaluate, since we are writing from Colombia. Colombia is one of the most affected countries by anti-personnel mines, which are made not only to destroy parts of the human body at once, but to isolate communities, innocent people and soldiers. These small weapons are put by the guerrilla (in most of the cases) in order to cause fear and reflect power, but the civil society is the main victim.

Aware of the problem, many countries subscribed the Ottawa Convention<sup>3</sup>, including Colombia with the objective of diminishing the landmine's problem. It is important to clear up that "today, Colombia is the fourth country in the world in number of anti-personnel mine victims, after Chechnya, Afghanistan and Angola, and the only country to destroy its arsenal of anti-personnel land mines amid ongoing armed confrontation" ([www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org))

Having that issue in mind, we developed a proposal to be lead by Canada's government within the Convention<sup>4</sup> (since it commits signatories to give assistance). The plan is divided in two: it consists on utilizing funds to develop new technologies in order to inactivate the landmines in a different way, because "mines that cost as little as \$3 on the open market can cost as much as \$1,000 each to clear" ([dsp-psd.communication.gc.ca](http://dsp-psd.communication.gc.ca)). Therefore, it is important to facilitate the eradication of these mines with technology. The other part of the proposal consists on developing an "insurance plan" to those civilians affected by the mines, because they should have the right to be returned into the society and to have psychological treatment. This proposal has to be lead by Canada, because it continues to play a leadership role in promoting the Ottawa Convention, and taking into account the specific needs of each affected country.

### **Conclusion**

To sum up, Canada, in spite of being a western country, may play the role of a neutral part (at least they could be seen as neutral by the Easters, that are seeking for something that at least in some way would not smell like USA),

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<sup>3</sup> Formally entitled the *Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction*. ([dsp-psd.communication.gc.ca](http://dsp-psd.communication.gc.ca))

<sup>4</sup> The Convention commits states that have ratified it to: (1) Never use, develop, produce, stockpile, or transfer anti-personnel landmines, or assist any other party to conduct these activities; (2) Destroy all stockpiled anti-personnel landmines within four years of the Convention's entry into force; (3) Clear all laid landmines within ten years of the Convention's entry into force; (4) When it is within their means, provide assistance to mine clearance, mine awareness, stockpile destruction, and victim assistance activities worldwide. ([dsp-psd.communication.gc.ca](http://dsp-psd.communication.gc.ca))

given its long earned tradition of peace keeper (or maker... but peace searcher in the end), and the steady and coherent policy they have showed, for example when they stopped selling nuclear raw materials to India and Pakistan when they found out that it was being used for hostile nuclear experiments (situation in which USA is blamed of playing two handed role), may give Canada the advantages to initiate a group of countries that may reduce the dangerous gap between Easters and westerns.

It is important to Canada and other countries alike, to persuade the UN Security Council to not only focus on those states with these kind of destructive weapons, but introducing effective controls on their means of delivery, and promote peaceful uses of nuclear power in a safe and secure manner. This can be achieved by sponsoring greater openness and transparency.

Following this initiative, focusing on each country's needs and not giving a "general solution", gives a more viable way out to the problem of proliferation states and landmine affected countries, because like this high-priority necessities of each country would be satisfied, and they will not see the need of having nuclear power or to develop small weapons to get any attention.

We also emphasize that none of the above efforts and proposals should take place without sustained effort to meet Canada's objectives inside the global arena. Canada has to evaluate its own international priorities and contrast them with the proposals furthered inside the United Nations.

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