

**Speech to the Canadian Pugwash Group
Annual Forum: Canada in a Dangerous World
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Global Security: A View from Down Under

Mr Speaker, distinguished guests and members of the Pugwash Group.

Kia Ora and warm Pacific greetings to you all.

Introduction

I would like to thank the Pugwash Group for inviting me to speak today.

I want to cover two areas in my contribution to this Forum. First, for reasons of currency and my own enthusiasm for the issue, I want to talk about the work of the New Agenda Coalition of countries, of which New Zealand is a member, and the recent events in New York.

I thought it might also be interesting to talk about New Zealand, and in particular its approach to the broad issue of security. In this context I want to highlight why we have such a strong focus on multilateralism. I also want to touch on our regional responsibilities

Disarmament

Unlike many of you here today, I am not a disarmament expert. I do however know when an issue is important and has consequences for the world as a whole. The issue of nuclear disarmament is one of those issues.

Most of my exposure to the issue until last year had been through the peace movement and as a politician in the New Zealand Parliament, where, as a member and chair of Parliament's Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee, I saw the issue of nuclear disarmament widely discussed within this multi-partisan committee, at international meetings of parliamentarians, and in discussions with individual politicians around the world.

For many many New Zealanders the issue of disarmament has grown into a deep, emotional, principled and environmental issue.

Our membership of the New Agenda Coalition is part of a historical trail which links to Government backed protests at French nuclear testing in the Pacific in the 1970s, the sinking of the Greenpeace vessel Rainbow Warrior in Auckland Harbour in 1985, Prime Minister David Lange's famous speech in the Oxford Union debate of 1985, and the enshrinement of a widely supported and deep seated non-nuclear stance in New Zealand legislation, that has, over time, become largely bi-partisan.

During my first twelve months as New Zealand High Commissioner to Canada I have become more aware of the global debate and the real politik that shapes other country's actions and reactions to the disarmament debate.

I have also had the absolute pleasure of developing my relationship with Doug Roche. Amongst New Zealanders who work in the field of disarmament Doug has iconic status: clear of purpose and determined to stay the course on what have been stormy seas of late.

With Doug's recent retirement from the Canadian Senate I decided to hold a dinner in his honour. I called Doug and he graciously accepted. I suggested that I invite the New Agenda Coalition Ambassadors based in Ottawa. Doug also agreed.

But then Doug, being Doug, not wanting to miss an opportunity, and being acutely aware that the vote on the New Agenda Resolution was coming up soon in the General Assembly of the United Nations in New York, suggested that I also invite a number of potentially sympathetic non-nuclear NATO Ambassadors. This clearly was going to be a working dinner.

And work we did. Every Ambassador around that table spoke knowledgeably about the issue of disarmament, placing their own countries within the wider context: as members of NATO, members of the G77.

While the real action was about to start in New York, I finished that evening with a sense of cautious optimism that the recent malaise affecting disarmament, as we headed toward the 2005 Review Conference, was being seriously addressed. Whether new momentum could be generated was another matter.

So what happened in New York?

This year the New Agenda Coalition (Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa and Sweden) came to New York with a more streamlined resolution. Gone was the omnibus approach that previously ran to seven pages. The 1 ½ page resolution was, by design, more attractive to NATO and like-minded states.

The resolution reminded nuclear weapons States of their “unequivocal undertaking” to the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals. The resolution called on “all States” to fully comply with their nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation commitments.

Priorities for action included:

- universal adherence to the NPT and the early entry-into-force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty;
- reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons and non-development of new types of nuclear weapons;
- negotiation of an effectively verifiable fissile material cut-off treaty;
- establishment of a subsidiary body to deal with nuclear disarmament at the Conference on Disarmament; and
- compliance with principles of irreversibility and transparency and verification capability.

The resolution was adopted with 135 in favour, 5 against and 25 abstentions. This was an improvement on last year’s numbers (121-6-38), but more significantly seven additional NATO countries joined Canada (which has supported the resolution three years running) in voting for the resolution (Belgium, Germany, Lithuania, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Norway and Turkey).

Along with important support from Japan, South Korea and Switzerland, this outcome needs to be used as a bridge, or as Doug Roche puts it “the moderate middle” in the nuclear weapons debate between the Nuclear Weapons States, who appear to be entrenching nuclear weapons in their military doctrines, and the Non-Aligned Movement, which wants immediate negotiations on a time-bound programme for nuclear disarmament.

This year’s resolution (now awaiting decision by the General Assembly as a whole) outlines intermediate and achievable gains on the path to nuclear disarmament. In the current international climate these gains may be about the maximum that this newly created bridge can bear as we head toward the NPT Review Conference in 2005, a review that must not fail.

New Zealand

Now for one of my favourite topics: New Zealand.

Where to start and how to restrict myself to the available time allocated to me?

New Zealand may be a small and geographically isolated country, but the global village that we now live in, the economic, cultural, and security connections that bind us all, mean that pretty well whatever is of concern to the rest of the world is also of concern to us.

How we respond to the issues, however, is a product of our history, geography, political development, and the nature of our relations with other countries.

I spend much of my time talking to Canadians about the economic and social revolution that took place in New Zealand from the mid 1980s. You will be spared that today as I am going to focus on the security theme.

Forgive me if this is somewhat scattergun, but my aim is to give you a flavour of New Zealand foreign policy, with a focus on security in a dangerous world.

At the strategic level New Zealand's foreign policy objectives are probably not too different from those of many other countries.

They boil down to three:

- maintaining political and economic security;
- being a good neighbour; and
- being a good global citizen, committed to collective action and the rule of law.

New Zealanders are committed multilateralists.

New Zealand has a long and proud history of supporting multilateral solutions to global problems. This is due in no small measure to our size. There are obvious constraints on what we can do on our own.

It's also true to say that a spirit of international idealism runs through New Zealand public opinion. This expresses itself in unwavering support for collective action and the United Nations.

Ever since New Zealand Prime Minister Peter Fraser's contribution at the San Francisco Conference to draft the United Nations Charter in 1945, we have championed the cause of the United Nations.

New Zealanders seem to expect that the United Nations will take a lead on the big-ticket issues on the international security agenda. New Zealand's response to Iraq, for example, was conditioned by what happened in the UN Security Council.

It also means that New Zealand devotes what many see as an effort disproportionate to our size, for example, in the pursuit of nuclear disarmament, the advocacy of human rights, the protection of the world environment and the rule of law.

Global Security

New Zealand, like much of the world, is no longer pre-occupied with the fears of threats to sovereignty as occurred during the Cold War and the international conflicts of the last century.

Great power politics are on a more co-operative and productive track than they have been for decades. This is so despite the continuing black clouds over the Middle East. And the causes for concern in the Asia/Pacific region – Afghanistan, Kashmir and the Korean Peninsula.

Inter-country tensions and conflicts have however been supplemented, if not replaced, by newer threats to peace and security involving non-state individuals and organisations.

The High Level Panel that UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, set up to look at the functioning of the United Nations, identified six types of contemporary threats. They are:

- rivalry between states and war;
- violence within states and state failure;
- economic and social threats including infectious disease;
- weapons of mass destruction;
- terrorism;
- and organised crime.

These new threats do not respect international borders. No corner of the world can assume it is immune from the actions of international terrorists and the purveyors of transnational crime.

Kofi Annan has called terrorism 'a global scourge with global effects'. It is not just a West European or North American problem.

New Zealand's response to terrorism has been on a number of fronts:

- getting our own house in order by ensuring we have the appropriate legal framework and government resources to deal with the threats terrorism poses;
- assisting Pacific Island countries to meet international counter terrorism obligations;
- engaging actively in regional counter-terrorism initiatives;
- and contributing to Operation Enduring Freedom.

In making an active contribution to the international campaign against terrorism, vigilance is needed to ensure that respect for the rule of law and fundamental human rights standards underpin our efforts.

It would indeed be a bitter irony if in the fight against terrorism we risked undermining the very values and freedoms we are seeking to uphold.

New Zealand has not shied away from the use of force, but only when all other options have been exhausted. New Zealand did not join the coalition of the willing in Iraq precisely for that reason.

We did not believe that the process in the United Nations had been allowed to run its course.

New Zealand has however had military personnel in **Iraq** since the UN resolution calling for assistance to that country. The 61 strong light engineering group has just come home.

Their mission was solely humanitarian and reconstruction. They were there to help Iraqis rebuild their country.

They were involved with fixing bridges, rebuilding schools and getting potable water to the inhabitants of Basra.

Our commitment to security and reconstruction in Iraq has not come to an end. We are working at the diplomatic level to nurture the relationship with Iraq, and we are continuing to provide funding for reconstruction through the United Nations and NGOs.

New Zealand has also contributed significantly for a country of our size to **Operation Enduring Freedom** in Afghanistan and the Gulf region through deployments of our army, navy and air force since that operation began in 2001.

Just over a year ago New Zealand took command from the Americans of the Provincial Reconstruction Team in Bamian, about 200 km north west of Kabul.

We think it is very important to continue to support the process of rebuilding society there.

There are also challenges to political and social stability closer to home.

Some of the island countries of the South Pacific face a formidable raft of problems. Ethnic tensions, population pressures, land disputes, a mismatch between western forms of governance and traditional systems, corruption and ultimately the failure of the rule of law have led to turmoil in some countries.

In a few, the situation is very fragile.

New Zealand and Australia are both heavily involved in helping Pacific Island countries to confront these challenges. We work together closely in the region, sometimes playing complementary roles.

A recent example was in the **Solomon Islands**.

At the request of the Solomon Islands Government, and with the endorsement of Pacific Forum governments, Australia led a Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (or RAMSI) in July of last year.

Police from a number of countries in the region, supported by defence personnel from Australia, New Zealand, the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu all worked alongside Solomon Islanders.

RAMSI was mandated under the Pacific Forum's 2000 Biketawa Declaration which provides for interventions upon request on the basis that all members of the Pacific Forum are part of the Pacific Islands extended family.

Its first objective was to restore order and stability. This has been achieved. It has transformed the lives of Solomon Islanders.

Law and order has been restored. People can live their lives and go about their business without fear.

RAMSI has been hailed as an excellent example of regional action to solve a regional problem. It is too soon yet to declare success, though RAMSI's focus has now moved to getting the economy moving again, and to rebuilding the machinery of government. There are still immense challenges.

Summing up

I'm going to stop there. I have by no means been comprehensive on either the work of the New Agenda Coalition or in discussing New Zealand's views on and policy toward global security.

What I hope I have conveyed, however, is that New Zealand and New Zealanders see their future as very much tied to developments upon which, as a small nation, we can have very little direct impact.

We have a "made in New Zealand" moral and philosophical view on many of these issues, which shape our approach.

We work very hard at finding common positions with others, and Canada is often in our sights as a partner as we develop and promote our views.

We continue to see multilateral approaches, particularly through the UN, as the best hope for greater global security – be it tackling terrorism, disarmament, climate change, transnational crime or the multitude of other issues affecting our collective future.

May I conclude by quoting from a former Labour Prime Minister, David Lange who said on the threat of nuclear weapons and New Zealand's place in an insecure world:

"New Zealand used to have the reputation of being some kind of an antipodean Noah's Ark, which would from within its quite isolated, preserve, spawn a whole new world of realistic human kind. Now, the fact is that we know that that is not achievable. We know that if the nuclear winter comes, we freeze, we join the rest of you. And that means that there is now a total denouement as far as any argument in favour of moral purpose goes. It is a strange, dubious and totally unaccepted moral purpose which holds the whole of the world to ransom."

Thank you for the opportunity to talk with you today.