



Anti-Missile System Offers 'False Security'

PRESS RELEASE

The Group of 78

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The United States defence system against ballistic missiles "offers no defence at all, but rather a false sense of security because it is unproven," The Group of 78 stated today at the end of its annual conference held at Cantley in the Gatineau.

In the course of a broad-ranging statement urging the federal government to put more emphasis on disarmament, the international affairs group said, "In reality ballistic missile defence reduces security because it is a pretext for the development of counter-weapons and counter-measures, plunging rival countries into an arms race." The group renewed its call on the government not to participate in the United States' ballistic missile defence project.

The two-day conference also adopted statements criticizing Canada's "abysmal" level of foreign aid in view of the needs of the poorer countries, and its "ill-conceived Anti-Terrorism Act." The group maintained that the Act requires thorough and immediate review "to ensure that it does not infringe on human rights and the protection of citizens and other persons in Canada from arbitrary arrest and detention." Noting the detention in Canada of five men without charge on alleged secret evidence which has not been divulged to them, the group held that: "All detainees and their lawyers must be accorded prompt access to the evidence on which the detention is based."

Former Canadian ambassador for disarmament Peggy Mason was re-elected to a second two-year term as chairman of the group, whose members have backgrounds in government, voluntary organizations, business, the professions, labour, the academic community, and journalism.

Founded in 1981 to promote arms control and disarmament, global economic equity, and a strengthened United Nations, the group stated at its latest conference, "Security among peoples and nations in this deeply interconnected and interdependent world requires restraint in the exercise of power, and moderation in the exercise of influence. Arms limitation and disarmament must therefore be priorities in the policies of all nations."