

CANADA AND THE 34TH SESSION OF
THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Flora MacDonald, will address the 34th Session of the UN General Assembly on Tuesday, September 25, 1979.

Many of the issues to be dealt with at this Assembly have been of concern to the United Nations for many years. Nevertheless, recent events such as the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty, the all-party Conference on Zimbabwe-Rhodesia and the just completed Non-Aligned Summit in Havana will influence General Assembly discussions. There are 121 items on the agenda before the Assembly.

Middle East

Last year, there were 16 Middle East resolutions relating to Palestinian refugees, the censure of Israel for its activities in the occupied Arab territories and the attempt to legitimize further the role of the PLO within the UN system. It is anticipated that the resolutions this year will be closely modelled on those of last year. Canada will continue to urge that the General Assembly act in ways that will strengthen the prospects for peace in the Middle East.

Cyprus

Despite the success of Secretary-General Waldheim in reconvening inter-communal talks in June, these were recessed soon after they commenced. It is expected that the debate on Cyprus will, therefore, follow the pattern of previous years. Canada's interest in Cyprus stems from concern for the cohesion of the North Atlantic Alliance, from humanitarian concern about the strife on the island and from the presence of Canadian peacekeeping forces.

Peacekeeping

There are five peacekeeping missions in operation, with the mandate of a sixth (UNEF II) recently terminated by the Security Council. The General Assembly will consider the lack of agreement to date on the underlying principles of UN peacekeeping. Canada has consistently pressed the UN to adopt clear guidelines for peacekeeping operations, including their financing.