

## ISRAEL

Capital:	Tel Aviv
Head of State:	President Ezer Weizman
Head of Government:	Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin (Labour)
Foreign Affairs Minister:	Shimon Peres (Labour)
Industry and Trade Minister:	Michael Harish (Labour)

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### DOMESTIC SITUATION

The historic Israel-Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) peace accord was signed on September 13, 1993. It provides for Palestinian control of Gaza and Jericho and a five-year transition/negotiation phase for the occupied territories as a whole. A peace agenda was later negotiated with Jordan. The others are anticipated soon with Syria and Lebanon. Despite serious opposition to the recent breakthrough, the government retains considerable support. Nonetheless, there is pressure to translate what are perceived by many as political concessions into security gains on the ground.

### CANADIAN INTERESTS

#### i) Trade and Economic

Canadian exports to Israel amounted to \$117 million in 1992, while the value of Canadian imports totalled \$132 million.

Canadian development assistance to the occupied territories (Israel is not eligible) has averaged \$7.8 million for each of the last five years. For 1992-93, \$9.2 million has been set aside for the occupied territories.

Canada does not export or import military equipment to or from Israel and other front-line states involved in the Arab-Israeli dispute. However, Canada is committed to reviewing this policy in light of progress made in the peace talks.

#### ii) Political

Canada has strongly supported Israel since its foundation in 1948. Relations have intensified with numerous official visits (Foreign Minister Peres in March 1993; Prime Minister Rabin this November). Canada and Israel have agreements on cultural relations, agriculture, trade, health, and Canadian studies. During Minister Peres' visit, a new agreement on industrial research and development was signed.