

Of course the issues are among the most difficult in the world to resolve. Israel has shown imagination and leadership before, in the peace process. Your treaty with Egypt was a momentous development in the history of the Middle East and of the world. It remains a monument to the wisdom of Prime Minister Begin and President Sadat. I noted that, the day I arrived, you had meetings with Mr. Butros Ghali, and we have welcomed Prime Minister Peres' deliberate reference to the Palestinians as a people. Those actions demonstrate a determination to continue to work towards a secure peace and Canada encourages and supports Israel in that path.

On this trip, I have also visited Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Egypt. I have come away with a renewed conviction that, despite many difficulties, a foundation does exist on which peace can be built. I perceived an urgent quality to the desire for peace, an urgency born out of a deeply felt concern that, unless a settlement is reached soon, the region could again slide towards conflict.

The moderation that was shown by the murdered mayor of Nablus, Zafer Al-Masri, is shared by many Palestinians. It is understandable that they need to be assured that their voice will be heard.

We share many of your concerns, including the plight of the Soviet Jewry. The recent release of Mr. Shcharansky was a major achievement, for which his friends, including Canadians, have prayed and toiled. His release should encourage us to redouble our efforts. I have raised the question of Soviet Jews in Moscow, in Kiev, in Helsinki at the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and elsewhere. Canada will continue to do everything it can on behalf of Jews wishing to leave the Soviet Union.

Part of our challenge is to broaden and deepen the direct relations between Canada and Israel. Trade between us has increased remarkably, including your exports to Canada. We are working to build even closer commercial and technological links. Our officials are working now to identify a project where we might work together in international development. Tomorrow we sign, officially, the agreement regarding El Al flights between Toronto and Tel Aviv.

There is an excellent Canadian Studies Program at the Hebrew University, and the Canadian Studies Association has been well-established. An important film co-production agreement was signed during your visit to Canada last year. You are sending tourists and missions to Expo in Vancouver, and the tide of Canadian visitors to your country continues unabated.