

The long, bloody and senseless war between Iran and Iraq has caused incredible suffering. It places at risk the future of the countries and peoples of the entire region. In these difficult circumstances too, Jordan has played an active and very positive role in endeavouring to mitigate the war's dangers and in seeking a fair solution to the conflict.

I pledge Canada's continuing support to the leaders of Jordan and to those of other countries in the region who are prepared to take the risks required to arrive at true and lasting peace.

Such support if it is to be of real value must go beyond mere words and have practical impact. For that reason, upon my return from the Middle East last spring the government began immediately to work towards enhanced economic cooperation between Canada and Jordan. Rapid progress has been made and already programs involving CIDA and Petro-Canada International are well underway. I am pleased that the private sector is also displaying great interest in pursuing commercial opportunities in Jordan. Today His Royal Highness met with a group of Canadian businessmen who are actively interested in the Kingdom. I sincerely believe that exchange will give impetus to this important aspect of the bilateral relationship.

Jordanians and Canadians share views on many key international issues such as questions of peace and of world economic development. We are both determined to make every effort we can to resolve regional differences and support all fair-minded efforts to achieve peace. Canadians will support both Jordan's commitment and its courage.

We must also give greater substance to our bilateral relationship; we must anchor our shared interests in a network of linkages, be these economic, cultural or human, from which both our countries will benefit. His Highness and I emphasized in our discussions today the great importance of giving effect to these goals.

This visit by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, is a vital step in building ties. We must all now work together, Jordanians and Canadians, to take advantage of the manifold possibilities that are open to us. To neglect them would make us culpable in the eyes of history. We will not let this happen.

I ask you to raise your glasses with me and toast our honoured guest, the Crown Prince of Jordan, and the reinforcement of ties of friendship and understanding between our two countries.