

It is a difficult dilemma, but my recent trip to South Africa has confirmed to me that sanctions can have a powerful effect on changing the domestic policies of governments. I am sure that the Jewish community in Canada rejoiced with millions of other people around the world this spring, as the pillars of apartheid began to fall.

Canadians can take particular pride in these developments, because it was the late Prime Minister John Diefenbaker who initiated the tough stance by the Commonwealth against South Africa, although he did say that "Canada would always keep a light on in the window for South Africa." Prime Minister Mulroney and my predecessor in this portfolio, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, were also instrumental in maintaining the pressure that has led to a slow but relentless change of heart by the leaders of South Africa. With the rest of the world, Canada anxiously awaits concrete signs that this progress is real and sustainable, and that the politics of race are dead once and for all in South Africa.

Ethnic hatred has been the source of instability in another world "hot spot" -- the troubled republics of the former country of Yugoslavia. Anti-Semitism has a long history in this region and is only one of a number of elements of a highly charged and volatile ethnic mix. Canada has played a forceful diplomatic role through the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) and the United Nations, and as a major participant in the large UN peacekeeping operation in the region.

The areas of Canadian involvement are as broad as the world, and I have provided this rather brief and selective "tour d'horizon" to remind you that, more than ever, Canada is an active and respected participant on the international scene.

As a member of the G-7, the Commonwealth, la Francophonie, the OAS, the CSCE, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and, of course, the UN, Canada is sought after in virtually every major international organization in the world.

This means that Canadian values and attitudes and standards are reflected in events ranging from the upcoming Earth Summit on the environment in Rio de Janeiro to the complex discussions on future security arrangements for Europe.

For Canadian Jews, that reputation and that presence are even more important when the subject turns to Israel and to peace in the Middle East.

Canada has been steadfast in its support of the international legitimacy of the State of Israel and was instrumental in the campaign that, last fall, finally led to the defeat of the odious UN resolution equating Zionism with racism.