

Declaration on Torture that the General Assembly adopted in 1975.

Peace and security

Our experience with peacekeeping has been different from our experience with human rights. The concepts and principles of UN peacekeeping have been the subject of strong disagreement, whereas the practice has been modestly successful.

Threats to peace and security vary from year to year, but we are rarely able to claim that none exist. This year we have been shocked by the continuing loss of life in Lebanon. The United Nations has not been able to contribute to peacemaking efforts there, but should remain ready to respond if the situation so requires.

A few weeks ago southern Africa was on the verge of disaster. It may still be so. But I am sure we are all encouraged by the developments of recent days. I pay tribute to the patient diplomacy of the Secretary of State of the United States and welcome the apparent change of mind in Pretoria and Salisbury that his efforts may have achieved. My Government agrees that the early independence of both Namibia and Rhodesia on the basis of majority rule and racial harmony is essential to the peace of Africa. It believes as well that South Africa must meet the legitimate political, social and economic demands of the majority of South Africans, supported by the virtually unanimous opinion of this Assembly, if such peace is to endure.

In the Middle East the UN has no choice but to continue the peacekeeping duties authorized by the Security Council. We were encouraged at this time last year by the interim agreement reached between Egypt and Israel on the withdrawal of their forces from Sinai. We look forward to further negotiations that could lead eventually to a peace settlement on the basis of the principles agreed by the Security Council in its Resolution 242, and that would take into account the legitimate concerns and interests of the Palestinian people. Whether negotiations are resumed bilaterally with the help of third-party mediation or whether they take place multilaterally in the presence of all the parties directly affected is less important than a joint determination by the states concerned to accept the necessity of establishing and maintaining peaceful relations between them. Pending the achievement of this objective, Canada will continue to contribute to UN peacekeeping operations and will oppose actions or initiatives that imperil the security and independence of states in the area, or make it more difficult for the UN to help in achieving a settlement.