



## **CANADA AND THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS**

### **Bilateral Negotiations**

- The Madrid Peace Process, launched in October 1991, is the latest effort to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. For the first time since the creation of Israel, Madrid brought together Arab, Israeli and Palestinian representatives to address the question of peace. It also produced a series of bilateral negotiations between Israel and its neighbours - namely Jordan, Syria and Lebanon - and the Palestinians.
- Eleven rounds of bilateral negotiations have been held in Washington. These negotiations have been long and difficult, reflecting the depth of emotion on all sides and the compromises that must be made to ensure a durable peace. The Israel-PLO Declaration of Principles, signed in Washington on September 13, 1993, and the Israel-Jordan Common Agenda, signed the next day, were momentous breakthroughs, launching a new beginning for the Middle East. Similar progress is expected with Lebanon and Syria.

### **Multilateral Negotiations**

- In Moscow, in January 1992, the United States and Russia launched the second phase of the Madrid Peace Process. Foreign ministers and delegates from 36 countries, including countries from the Middle East, along with representatives from Europe, Japan, China and Canada, began a series of multilateral negotiations.
- The purpose of the talks is to focus on issues of regional concern and to take concerted action in addressing them. The negotiations will likely take on a key role in co-ordinating assistance to support the Israel-PLO agreement.
- Five working groups have been established to deal with areas of pressing concern:
  - 1) Arms Control and Regional Security;
  - 2) Regional Economic Development;
  - 3) Refugees;
  - 4) Water Resources; and
  - 5) Environment.
- Canada chairs the Refugee Working Group; its mandate is to improve the lives of people displaced by the Arab-Israeli conflict. The main subjects under discussion include: data bases; human resource development including manpower training and job creation; family reunification; development of economic and social resources; child welfare and public health.

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