

to be seen at firsthand if one is to understand properly the responses of the countries concerned to events touching them.

**Diplomatic  
support**

I see my return visit to Israel as a reaffirmation of Canada's fundamental commitment to Israel. We have consistently supported its existence as an independent and secure state in the area. This is a basic element in our Middle East policy and is not subject to change. Because of our commitment, we have at times gone very far in extending our diplomatic support to Israel. Where, for example, the existence of Israel and its legitimacy have been challenged in international fora, we have taken a strong position against such efforts to undermine Israel.

In recent months, three attempts have been made to strip Israel of its rights of membership in UN bodies – at the International Atomic Energy Agency General Conference, the International Telecommunications Union Plenipotentiary Conference and the United Nations General Assembly. We not only opposed these attempts energetically because of our support for the principle of universality of membership, but in some instances we took a lead in order to defend that principle. At the IAEA Conference last September, for instance, Canada and other like-minded states were successful in obtaining a blocking third to defeat a resolution to expel Israel from the Agency because of its earlier attack on Iraqi nuclear facilities. Unfortunately, in the dying moments of the conference, an incorrect procedural ruling on a late vote by one delegation which broke a 40/40 tie, led to the rejection of the Israeli credentials for that specific conference. Canada, along with 16 other states, walked out of the meeting in protest.

One further point worth making about the hundreds of resolutions in the UN system: Canada has not drafted these resolutions and has no control over their contents. As a result, we do not see them as a satisfactory way of expressing Canadian policy although in our voting we take account of the basic thrust and balance of each resolution.

I recall that, in 1976, former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin remarked that, to outsiders the Arab-Israeli conflict looks much simpler and much more solvable than, unfortunately it is in reality. If Canadians ever thought that (and I do not think they have, given our long experience in Middle East peacekeeping operations), events since then have certainly shown how difficult the road to a peaceful settlement is. Issues that we were discussing in 1976 have not been resolved and are still among the questions which will have to be dealt with in moving towards peace. In Israel, I had long talks on the central position of Resolutions 242 and 338 as the basis of a peaceful settlement and the need for Israel's Arab neighbours to accept the existence of Israel. I also discussed the requirement that Israel withdraw from territories occupied in 1967, the obstacle to a peaceful solution created by the establishment of settlements in the occupied territories, and the need for a solution to the Palestinian problem that recognizes the rights of the Palestinians.

---