



Statements and Speeches

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KOREAN AIRLINE INCIDENT ISSUE AT CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE

Speech by the Honourable Jean-Luc Pepin, Minister of State (External Relations) at the Ministerial Session on the Madrid Follow-up Meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, Madrid, September 7, 1983.

...The presence in Madrid this week of ministers of the states participating in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) is a testament to the importance this conference holds for our respective governments and peoples, and to our deep concern that the CSCE process should not founder. This forum, and those ministers present, must unfortunately now bear witness to a tragedy which evokes indignation.

I am referring of course to the destruction of a Korean Airlines *Boeing 747* on August 31. The conscious in-flight destruction of this civilian, unarmed passenger aircraft by sophisticated fighter aircraft of the Soviet Union, no matter where or how it occurred, has outraged public opinion throughout the world.

This action has uselessly eradicated the lives — 269 of them — citizens of many of the states represented here today. In the case of my own country, at least ten Canadians have perished. There can be no justification, whatever might have been the circumstances, for this callous demonstration of the eagerness of a state to exercise its territorial jurisdiction against the unintentional presence in its air space of a civilian airliner and to destroy in this instance the lives of innocent citizens.

What worries me most is what would happen to international commercial transportation if each time an aircraft goes astray — and we know it does happen often enough — it is shot down.

It is with this in mind that my government has proposed in the United Nations Security Council that there be: first, a full and impartial enquiry carried out urgently by the Secretary-General; second, that the International Civil Aviation Organization be requested to make an urgent and thorough investigation with a view to making recommendations for improvements of international civil aviation regulations and practices which will preclude ever again the repetition of such an incident; and, third, that compensation be paid.

We urge the Soviet Union to participate willingly and fully in these efforts to find out how this tragedy happened and by so doing to ensure that it is never repeated. We urge the Soviet Union to meet the demands of an outraged public opinion around the world by acknowledging responsibility, by expressing regret, and by offering compensation. In putting these proposals forward we are giving the Soviet Union an opportunity to contribute to international law in this area.

The Soviet action has served to underline the fragility of the confidence and stability that now exists among sovereign states throughout Europe and the world. This wanton and seemingly uncontrolled