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STATEMENT BY MR. STEPHEN LEWIS, AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE OF CANADA TO THE UNITED NATIONS,
ON THE STATUS OF THE OBSERVER MISSION OF THE PALESTINE
LIBERATION ORGANIZATION (PLO) TO THE
UNITED NATIONS IN NEW YORK

Speaking on behalf of the governments of Australia, Canada and New Zealand and referring to legislation passed by the USA Congress which would, if implemented, force the closure of the Palestine Liberation Organization's (PLO) United Nations Observer office in New York, Mr. Lewis noted that the host government is under a legal obligation to allow the PLO to maintain its United Nations office. He expressed the hope of all three governments that the matter would be resolved quickly by the host government and the PLO's office would be permitted to remain open. This would avoid setting an unfortunate precedent for the status of all observer missions at the United Nations. He noted that, if it proves necessary, the procedure for dispute settlement, set out in the Headquarters Agreement between the UN and the host government could be utilized. Mr. Lewis expressed the hope that the participants would not politicize this issue and would seek the broadest possible consensus on the legal issues involved.

The statement by Ambassador Lewis is attached.

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Secretary of State
for
External Affairs

Secrétaire d'État
aux
Affaires extérieures

Canada