

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Rather than a statement, I thought it might be worthwhile my dealing with some of the issues that have come up either in this committee or elsewhere.

Since my appearance before you last week, there have been a number of developments that took the political side of this crisis. What I would like to do is just to touch on a few issues briefly and then proceed immediately to questions.

One of those has to do with the consequences of the missile campaign against Israel and Saudi Arabia. Among the most important developments has been Iraq's continued effort to draw Israel into the war through missile attacks in civilian centres, particularly Tel Aviv. Israeli restraint, in refusing to be goaded into immediate retaliation, is to be widely commended, as it has been by this Government and by others.

As I told the House late last week, I spoke to the Foreign Minister of Israel, David Levy, to express our sympathy to the victims and to their families, and to tell him that while we recognized Israel's right of response, we admired their restraint, which restraint could only be helpful in terms of maintaining the solidarity of the Coalition and resisting Saddam Hussein's obvious attempts to use an attack on Israel to divide the Coalition.

The missile campaign against Israel and Saudi Arabia is continuing, as we have seen today. Iraqi efforts to broaden the war and to create divisions through the indiscriminate bombing of civilian populations continue. We, of course, recognize that if Iraq pursues its missile campaign against Israel, it may be asking the unreasonable, to accept unending restraint. From my discussions with other Coalition members, however, I do not believe that it is possible for Iraq to create divisions in the Coalition, even if they were able finally to precipitate an Israeli response.

On the question of humanitarian assistance, in response to the missile attacks on Israel, Canada offered whatever assistance we could; to date, we have provided some \$500,000 through the Canadian Red Cross to the counterpart of the Canadian Red Cross in Israel to help with the provision of medical supplies, temporary housing and the rehabilitation of damaged homes.

We have now heard that Iraq has again opened its border with Jordan and that some displaced persons are coming across. Our information is that the numbers are, at the moment, manageable, manageable from the perspective of the Jordanians, the arrangements now in place, but we shall continue monitoring that situation and should additional assistance be required, Canada will, of course, be prepared to contribute to that additional assistance.