

to the entrepreneurship of the Lebanese community in Canada. Our exports increased from less than \$8 million in 1990 to nearly \$44 million in 1993. I wish to note here in Montréal that Quebec alone accounts for 63 per cent of all Canadian exports to Lebanon.

We support efforts to ensure Canada's presence in Lebanon. A trade mission (the first in 17 years) was conducted in November 1993. The eight members of Canada's private sector and representatives of my department received a warm welcome from President Hraoui, Prime Minister Hariri, and Lebanese business people.

In January 1994, business people sponsored by the Canada-Arab Business Council went to Lebanon. In May, Minister for International Trade Roy MacLaren's parliamentary secretary, Mac Harb, made his second visit to Lebanon with one of our directors of trade development. A few weeks ago, another trade mission in the telecommunications sector visited Lebanon and Syria. At the same time, other Canadian firms took part in the "Rebuild Lebanon" exhibition in Beirut. These exchanges help to make Canadian business people more visible on the Lebanese market, where a good dozen Canadian companies are currently implementing projects.

At the same time, I am well aware that these reconstruction projects, and the trade opportunities they offer, will require us to make an effort to assist the poorest in Lebanon, who are still suffering from the trauma of war and must now face inflation.

CIDA will continue to provide assistance through Canadian or Lebanese NGOs active in Lebanon, and multilateral organizations involved in humanitarian assistance to Palestinian refugees and Lebanese displaced within their own country. Not counting our contribution to UNRWA, CIDA allocated \$2 million for Lebanon in 1994.

Canadian-Lebanese Relations - The Human Factor

I began my presentation by talking about the importance of the human factor in our relations with Lebanon. Indeed, I do not need to tell you that there are over 250 000 Canadians of Lebanese descent. Thus, there are few families in Lebanon that do not have a relative in Canada. Many Canadians, including several members of Parliament and senators, in addition to business people of Lebanese origin, naturally follow current developments in Lebanon with keen interest.

I am thinking, for example, of Senator De Bané's attendance at the first world conference of parliamentarians of Lebanese origin in Lebanon in November 1993; Senator Hébert's attendance at the launching of the Association of Lebanese Graduates in Canada in