



# communiqué

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## SITUATION IN THE WEST BANK AND GAZA

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Mark MacGuigan, today deplored the sharp increase in tension that has developed in the past few days in the West Bank and Gaza leading to the tragic loss of life, injuries and severe disruption in normal daily activity.

The Canadian Government is concerned, he said, about the dismissal of the elected mayors of three towns and the prolonged closing of Bir Zeit University, as well as the continuing demonstrations and general strikes. In these tense circumstances, he counselled all involved to exercise restraint and avoid provocation and violence. If not checked, such violence could not only create further obstacles to the success of the autonomy negotiations but could also have far-reaching consequences for stability and peace in the region.

In Dr. MacGuigan's view, the situation once again pointed to the need for a negotiated resolution of the dispute, withdrawal of Israel from territories occupied in 1967, peace and secure borders for all states in the area and recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.