

3) ECONOMIC DISPARITIES

When faced with numerous conflicts, especially those involving less developed countries, Canada has always emphasized social and economic imperatives. This need is even more urgent in the Middle East. Reconstruction is doomed to fail if it ignores social and human dimensions and does not address economic disparities.

The region requires a new framework, which must be defined by the states that make up the region and the people who live in them. There can be no peace without prosperity, and no stability without justice either within states or between states. Democracy also promotes justice, prosperity and peace. Long-term security cannot be built solely on military structures and political agreements. Long-term security, in the Middle East as elsewhere, can rest only on genuine co-operation between states, marked by dialogue and confidence. It is in this context that I developed the concept of co-operative security before the most recent General Assembly of the United Nations.

Our role is to encourage the countries of this region to strive toward such an objective. For instance, after the hostilities have ceased, the Gulf states and indeed the entire Middle East might consider creating an organization for the purpose of economic cooperation. Such an organization, which might be affiliated with the United Nations and maintain contact with the major international economic and financial institutions, would help to ensure greater economic stability in the region.

LESSONS OF THE CRISIS

Finally, we must begin now to learn the important lessons of this conflict. We bear a considerable burden of responsibility. Over the years, to varying degrees, we have all helped to create a military apparatus in this region, especially in Iraq, that is beyond human comprehension. Military assistance in the region has exceeded economic assistance. This must stop. The governments most concerned are already making an effort in this regard.

To be credible, any peace plan must include strict measures to check the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the stockpiling of conventional weapons in the region. Multilateral negotiations have already begun regarding these crucial issues, such as the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and missile launching techniques. So far, however, their success has been limited owing to the lack