



# Statements and Speeches

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No. 74/16

THE MIDDLE EAST: THE WILL TO PEACE AND THE FORM IT TAKES MUST BE EVOLVED BY THE PARTIES CONCERNED

A Speech by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, to the United Nations General Assembly, New York, November 20, 1974.

No one who is familiar with the developments in the Middle East in the past quarter-century can fail to be deeply moved by the human suffering that has been caused by the perpetual upheaval, insecurity and armed conflict in that region. Though far removed from this area, Canada has not and could not remain indifferent to this tragedy, and has tried to make a helpful contribution to the United Nations efforts to grapple with the problem.

Canada's fundamental concern has always been to help bring about a just and durable peace. To be just, it must take full account of the legitimate interests of all the peoples, and to be durable it must be developed and accepted by all. No imposed solution could endure.

We consider it essential to any lasting and comprehensive settlement that there be respect for the sovereignty, the territorial integrity and the political independence of Israel and of every other state in the Middle East. We remain opposed to any attempt to challenge the right of Israel or the right of any other state in the region to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threat and acts of force.

The important issue we are now examining, concerning the status of the Palestinians and their role in efforts to achieve a negotiated peace, has figured prominently in this tragic history. From the outset, Canada has recognized that the Palestinians represent a major interested element in the Middle East situation. Security Council Resolution 242, firmly subscribed to by Canada since its adoption in 1967, called for a just settlement of the Palestine refugee problem. Canada has given and continues to give substantial financial support to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency. Recent developments, including this debate, testify to the growing acknowledgement that cognizance must be taken of the need for the Palestinian people to be represented and heard in negotiations involving their destiny. Canada is fully in accord with the view that any enduring peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute must take account of the legitimate concerns of the Palestinians.

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