

In this context, my colleague the Minister of National Defence, the Honourable David Collette, visited the region last June. Furthermore, at the conclusion of the peace process, Canada would be willing to consider participating in further peacekeeping missions in the Golan region.

With regard to trade, a few developments are worth mentioning. The Minister of Transport of Quebec, Mr. Elkas, headed a trade mission to Syria in 1993; the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs of Quebec, Mr. Ciaccia, did likewise in May of this year. On the Syrian side, the Syrian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Allouch, came to Ottawa on an official visit in July 1994, a first for Canada at this level. During his visit, he informed us of Syria's wish to open an embassy in Ottawa in the near future.

I am confident that these contacts will lead to the desired results. I repeat that we will continue to encourage Canada's private sector to go ahead and develop our bilateral relations with Syria.

#### **Development Assistance to Lebanon**

The development of Lebanon depends not only on the material reconstruction of its assets but also on the re-establishment of public institutions. Recognizing the positive development of the situation, I recently approved the launching of an initial bilateral project funded by CIDA, for a total of some \$770 000. Implemented jointly with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the project aims to reform public administration in co-operation with the Lebanese Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, under the theme of good governance.

CIDA is planning another project to support training for managers and administrators of Lebanese non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Finally, a third project could focus on the development and modernization of the taxation department of the Lebanese Ministry of Finance.

#### **Reconstruction Program - Trade**

Lebanon also offers a great number of opportunities for Canada's private sector. Please allow me to give you a brief overview.

The Beirut reconstruction program launched by Prime Minister Hariri's government, a project totalling some \$12 billion over a 10-year period, offers numerous business opportunities for Canadian exporters wishing to take part in this reconstruction effort.

After having collapsed during the civil war, our trade with Lebanon is now experiencing an encouraging recovery, largely due