



Statements and Speeches

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GUIDE-LINES FOR UN PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS

A Statement in the Special Political Committee of the United Nations by Mr. Saul F. Rae, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Canada to the UN, on November 28, 1973.

On the surface, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations does not appear to have been able to record substantial progress in its work in the past year. However, the work of the Committee, particularly in the less-formal deliberations of its Working Group, has served to clarify the issues and assist in a sustained search for workable guide-lines for UN peacekeeping operations. The recent decisions of the Security Council concerning the establishment of a United Nations Emergency Force in the Middle East have, in a dramatic way, illuminated several of the basic issues that have been the subject of close attention and discussion in the Special Committee. Events of the last few weeks may similarly have contributed to the clarification of these issues, and of the attitudes of states. At the same time, however, we must recognize that, in the case of the second UNEF as in the case of the first, and even with the long and varied United Nations experience in peace-keeping and peace-observing, the administrative mechanisms and accepted procedures available for this purpose require strengthening. The objectives of the Special Committee — to codify the principles that should govern peace-keeping and to develop the required institutions and methods to implement peacekeeping decisions promptly and effectively — remain as valid as ever.

The continuing importance of peace-keeping as a UN instrument for the maintenance of international peace and security was underlined by the Honourable Mitchell Sharp, Secretary of State for External Affairs, in his statement to the General Assembly on September 25. He said the following: "Canada remains prepared to play its part in peace-keeping and peace-observation. But we have learned a lesson from our long and frustrating attempts to have these peace-keeping bodies operate objectively. The lesson is this — peace-keeping and peace-observation operations stand the best chance of success if they are conducted under the authority of the United Nations Security Council."

In this regard, we were most interested in the statement of the United States Secretary of State before the General Assembly on September 24 that the United States was prepared to consider how the Security Council could play a more central role in the conduct of peacekeeping operations.
