

Israel and its Arab neighbours to make the gestures needed to improve the negotiating climate.

Canadians were deeply shocked at the unprovoked attacks on Israeli cities by Iraq's SCUD missiles. Both the Prime Minister and Mr. Clark expressed Canada's profound sympathy as well as horror at these attacks. The government provided \$500 000 in humanitarian assistance through the Canadian Red Cross to its Israeli equivalent, Magen David Adom, for emergency relief. In response to an Israeli request, Canada sent 10 000 gas masks, which were distributed through the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), to help provide protection to Palestinians in the occupied territories.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs visited Israel in November 1990 and March 1991. The messages he carried indicated Canada's support and encouragement of Israel's restraint during SCUD attacks.

Egypt played a major role in leading moderate Arab opinion during the Gulf crisis. In addition to mobilizing the Arab League, Egypt made a direct contribution of troops to the coalition. Badly affected by the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait due to the loss of remittances, of markets in Iraq and the urgent need to absorb workers displaced from both Kuwait and Iraq, Egypt needed emergency assistance. On March 31, 1991, Canada provided some \$26 million directly to the Government of Egypt and provided \$13 million in debt relief, forgiving principal and interest due on Egyptian Official Development Assistance (ODA) debt. The accumulated assistance to Egypt permitted it to approach more optimistically an agreement with the IMF and World Bank on debt rescheduling and the restructuring of its economy.

Canada's relations with Saudi Arabia were substantially strengthened during the crisis because of Canada's tangible commitment to re-establishing Gulf security. Decisive Saudi action permitted the mobilization of foreign forces to liberate Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia's role will be essential in ensuring post-war security and prosperity in the region. Mr. Clark met with Saudi leaders on his March visit to the Middle East.

Among other events of note in the region were the unification of two Yemens under a new government, and the subsequent opening of a Yemeni Embassy in Ottawa late in 1990. For the first time since the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979, Canada and Iran exchanged ambassadors in fall 1990. In addition, Mr. Clark's visit to Tehran in March 1991 strengthened Canada's position in the bilateral dialogue on human rights.

The decision by Syria to join the Arab forces combatting the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait had significance beyond its military contribution. Canada welcomed the apparently cautious move from Syria's habitual role in the region because of its potential effects on other regional conflicts. The Secretary of State for External Affairs also met with the President of Syria, Hafez el Assad, in March 1991.

Lebanon has witnessed encouraging developments in the implementation of the Taif Agreement of October 1989, meant to reconcile different factions in the country. Constitutional amendments have changed the distribution of responsibilities between the major political and concessional groups. The Government of Lebanon and its army have been gradually re-establishing control over the capital, Beirut, and the rest of the country, with the cooperation of various voluntarily disbanding militia. Canada welcomed and supports these developments.

The Gulf crisis was near-disastrous for Jordan, due to the influx of Jordanians, Palestinians and foreign nationals returning from Kuwait following the Iraqi invasion. Canada responded quickly with humanitarian assistance to help international agencies meet the immediate needs of these displaced persons. Jordan was also one of the prime beneficiaries of the \$75 million allocated to assist those countries hardest hit by the economic consequences of the crisis.

Canada maintained a constructive dialogue with Jordan throughout the period of the Gulf crisis. As a sign of Canada's recognition of the importance of Jordan's role in the region, Mr. Clark was the only foreign minister of a principal coalition country to visit Jordan during the crisis, and the first one to visit it after the conclusion of hostilities. Canada's relations with Jordan were further strengthened by a private visit to Canada by King Hussein's brother, Crown Prince Hassan.