

legitimate, independent state in the Middle East. Because of our support for the principle of universality, we oppose any move to suspend or expel Israel from the United Nations or its specialized agencies. At the same time, we have expressed in the UN our opposition to certain Israeli policies.

Occupied territories

Canada has made it clear to Israel that we cannot accept the position that it has gained the right to retain permanent control over the occupied territories. We are deeply concerned over action which Israel has taken on the ground to extend its control: its annexation of East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights as well as its establishment of settlements in the occupied territories. We regard these actions as contrary to international law and extremely unhelpful to the peace process. The settlements have greatly increased in number, area and total population since the mid-70s when we began to criticize their establishment. We would like to see an end to settlements activity, not just a freeze. The repeated assertions by Israeli spokesmen that Israel will never withdraw from these territories, coupled with the announced determination to increase the number of Israeli settlements in them and to reject any suggestion about their removal in any peace arrangement, seriously undermine the possibility of successful negotiations leading to a permanent and secure peace. We have also criticized the strong measures taken by Israel in the occupied territories, including the closing of Palestinian universities, tough measures to put down demonstrations and the expulsion of some mayors and the dismissal of other mayors and municipal councils.

The world has come in recent years to acknowledge the identity of the Palestinians as a people. We recognize that for there to be a just peace, the legitimate rights of the Palestinians must be realized, including their right to play a full part in negotiations to determine their future and their right to a homeland within a clearly defined territory, the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The nature of the homeland and its relationship with its neighbours should be decided by the parties to the dispute through negotiation.

We do not officially recognize the PLO. That is, we do not accept its claim to be the "sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people", and we are giving no consideration to doing so. However, because of the PLO's obvious importance among Palestinians, we have had contacts with it on a range of topics in a number of places. We have tried to counsel the PLO to pursue a political course and to reject violence. We are following closely the meeting of the Palestine National Council, currently taking place in Algiers.

Canada has given strong support to international efforts to meet the humanitarian needs of the Palestinians. Over the years, we have contributed \$70 million (US) to UNRWA.

Camp David accord

Canada has been one of the strongest supporters of the Camp David accord with its provisions for full autonomy and self-government in the occupied territories as the
