

On 6 December 1991, the annual UN General Assembly resolution on a nuclear-weapon free zone in the Middle East was adopted without a vote. Resolution 46/30¹ calls on countries in the region to declare their support for a nuclear-weapon free zone and to refrain from developing, producing, testing or acquiring nuclear weapons until such a zone is established. It also requests the Secretary-General to consult with states in the region on ways of furthering progress towards a nuclear-weapon free zone, and requires him to report to the General Assembly at its next session.

CURRENT CANADIAN POSITION

Canada supports regional arms control initiatives and as part of its support for the Middle East peace process is a strong supporter of arms control in the region. In a statement at the opening of the Middle East peace talks in January 1992, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mrs. Barbara McDougall, made clear Canada's support for Middle East arms control and expressed Canada's willingness to provide assistance in areas of Canadian expertise such as multilateral involvement in arms control, verification and non-proliferation. In addition Mrs. McDougall said that Canada would be willing to act as host for the arms control working group.² Canada was a participant in the first meeting of the Middle East Working Group on Arms Control and Regional Security, which met 11-14 May 1992 in Washington, DC.³

PARLIAMENTARY COMMENT

The Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade held a hearing on the situation in the Middle East in November 1991, which included some discussion of arms control in the Middle East, as it fit into the broader process and as an area where Canada might provide a contribution.⁴

¹ UN General Assembly. Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East. Resolution 46.30, 6 December 1991.

² Secretary of State for External Affairs. "A Statement for Canada by the Honourable Barbara McDougall, Secretary of State for External Affairs at the Middle East Multilateral Conference," Statement, 92/2, 28 January 1992.

³ "Middle East Arms Control," *The Disarmament Bulletin*, Final Notice, June 1992: 2.

⁴ See: Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade. *Proceedings*, No. 14, 6 November 1991.