

in other quarters. Since then, further terrorist acts within Israel, in Kuwait and elsewhere have provided recurrent grim reminders of the fragility of such stability as can be found in the region. We cannot but emphatically deplore this relentless recourse to violence which compounds the impasse from which we must escape.

I talked about Lebanon in every capital. I certainly talked about Lebanon in Israel. Indeed this was among the main subjects of my discussions. Some of the problems we examined are, unfortunately, no less troubling today, although much has happened in Lebanon since my visit. We have seen recurrent violent hostilities, interspersed by fragile cease-fire arrangements. Elements of the Multi-National Force have been progressively withdrawn. The agreement of May 17 last year between Israel and Lebanon has been abrogated, a development viewed by the government of Israel as perpetuating threats to security along its border with Lebanon. Prime Minister Shamir in a letter I received from him last week reiterated that Israel has no wish to keep its forces in Lebanon a day longer than necessary, but must look to the safety of its population by ensuring that Lebanese territory is not used as a base for terrorist operations. This same concern was underlined during my meetings with him last October in Jerusalem. I can readily appreciate this preoccupation of the government of Israel about the security of its territory and its people, a preoccupation which we take fully into account in our continuing attentive evaluation of Middle Eastern developments.

Events in Lebanon also figured prominently in my conversations in Damascus. This was my first visit to Syria and my first opportunity to hear from the President and the Foreign Minister their appreciation of the situation. There I was told that at first-hand the restoration of stability in Lebanon is important for the security of Syria, particularly given the proximity of Israeli troops to its capital. It was pointed out to me also that Syria had traditionally played a prominent role in the political life of Lebanon, and was relied upon to sustain the legitimate interests of factions which considered themselves discriminated against. In response to this, I underlined Canada's concern that Syrian influence should be exercised in a constructive and responsible manner for peace. There should be no doubt about that. I made this point directly to President Assad. That Syria plays a substantial role in the affairs of the area is clearly a given which must be taken into account. When I met with the President of Israel, Mr. Herzog, I found his analysis of Syria quite