



Statements and Speeches

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CURRENT ISSUES IN CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY

A Statement by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Don Jamieson, to the House of Commons Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence, Ottawa, March 8, 1979.

We face a complex and challenging agenda in the management of Canada's foreign relations. The world seems to be going through a period of rapid political and economic change with profound implications for all of us. I shall briefly set forth some foreign-policy issues that engaged the efforts of my department and others during 1978 and will test our talents and resources during the coming year.

(a) Vietnam, Cambodia and China

There has been a dangerous deterioration in the situation in Southeast Asia during the past year. The increasing resort to armed force is a cause of serious concern. We first witnessed the invasion of Cambodia by Vietnam, and the toppling of the Pol Pot Government in Phnom Penh. Whatever may be thought about that government's human-rights policies (and I have condemned them), Vietnam's use of force to change the government in Cambodia and to establish control over it was unacceptable. This action seriously destabilized the region.

We regret that the position of the Soviet Union prevented the Security Council from coming to grips with this situation, which was aggravated in late February when China's military forces entered the northern part of Vietnam. This action led to a further increase in political and military tension. We made high-level *démarches* in the capitals concerned and actively supported efforts towards a political solution in the Security Council or elsewhere. It is encouraging that the Chinese have now announced their intention to withdraw from Vietnam, but we must not underestimate the problems remaining to be settled between China and Vietnam when military activities have been terminated. The ultimate aim must be the achievement of reconciliation and peace throughout the area.

(b) Southern Africa

Canada has taken a leading role in concert with other major Western countries in pursuing peaceful solutions to the racial and decolonization problems of southern Africa. The Secretary-General has now proposed the implementation phase of a Western-authored plan, which was endorsed by the Security Council, to bring Namibia to independence. The plan involves the establishment of a military and civilian peace-keeping group to supervise elections. Active discussions on how to implement the plan are taking place. Canada is also prepared to lend whatever support may be appropriate to continuing, but so far disappointing, efforts to resolve the long-standing Rhodesia issue. As for South Africa, the Government continues to keep its policies under review, in particular those affecting commercial relations. We are especially
