

improve. However, Canadian membership on the Security Council of the United Nations beginning in 1989 will not make decisions easier. The Council will be deeply involved in implementing the agreement to bring Namibia to independence, a task that will require South African cooperation and in which Canada has been asked to participate.

### The Middle East

Violence in the Israeli occupied territories of Gaza and the West Bank provoked widespread international concern during 1988. This was a new development. Israel's relations with her northern neighbours, particularly Lebanon, had previously been the major focus of international attention. While these relations remained tense, the outbreak of Palestinian resentments served to remind the international community that the core of the conflict in the Middle East revolves around the relations between Israelis and Palestinians.

The uprising in the territories began on 9 December 1987 and over the course of the next year led to over 300 deaths. Israel was criticized at the United Nations and elsewhere for using harsh measures, including deportation, to deal with the unrest, and there was division and uncertainty amongst Jewish communities abroad. Diplomatic efforts, led by the US, to find a basis for agreement between Israel and her neighbours, failed, and the results of the Israeli elections in November made the outlook no better. On the other hand, a decision by Jordan in July to sever its links with the West Bank and to hand over responsibility to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) galvanized the Palestine National Council into declaring on 15 November an independent state of Palestine, since recognized by some seventy or more countries. In December