

signal to Saddam Hussein and to other potential aggressors that the UN is incapable of responding effectively to aggression. No moral superiority accrues to those who stand on the sidelines and let others defend their principles. Canada is a peaceful country -- but Canada is not a neutral country, nor a country that expects a free ride.

Canadian forces are playing an important role in the Gulf conflict, albeit one that is more modest than countries like the U.S., Britain or France. Commodore Ken Summers is the Commander of Canadian Forces in the Middle East. He is based, along with the Canadian Joint Headquarters, in Manamah, Bahrain. Commodore Summers reports directly to the Chief of the Defence Staff, General de Chastelain, in Ottawa. Canadian Forces are at all times under direct Canadian command.

The Canadian Air Task Group, based in Doha, Qatar is commanded by Colonel Lalonde. Its operations are co-ordinated through Canadian staff at the Multinational Headquarters in Riyadh. Canadian aircraft are now flying both air patrol over our vessels in the Persian Gulf and sweep and escort for aircraft of the multinational force conducting missions over Iraq and occupied Kuwait. Security for the Canadian Air Task Group is provided by 100 soldiers from the well-known Van Doos regiment.

The Canadian Task Group (naval) is commanded by Captain Dusty Miller. Our ships are now participating in a Logistics Force which provides escort and resupply for combat naval forces in the Gulf. The destroyers Terra Nova and Athabaskan act as escorts, while the supply ship Protecteur is on refuelling/resupply duty. Captain Miller has Tactical Control of all ships in the Logistics Force, comprising 24 ships from 11 countries. There are more than 200 Newfoundlanders serving on Canadian ships in the Gulf.

As well, Canada is in the process of sending a field hospital to be attached to a U.K. medical facility in Saudi Arabia. The field hospital will involve about 550 people, including a security battalion to protect the hospital.

Turning back Saddam Hussein's aggression in Kuwait will not be quick or easy. But that only adds to the importance that we attach, when that task is achieved, of securing peace and security in the Middle East for the long term.

We believe the proposal we put to UN Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar before January 15 could be helpful in building a stable peace after the current conflict. And we believe that the arms race in the Middle East, especially the spread of weapons of mass destruction, must be brought under control.