

the Canadian Government abolished the requirement for citizens of Israel to obtain visitor visas when they travel to Canada. Since the waiving of the visa requirement will free some 50,000 Israeli visitors annually from the need to obtain visas to come to this country, it represents a very substantial facilitation of the vital human interchange which is the very fabric of our bilateral relationships.

All this to say that we are moving ahead, with goodwill and energy, in further enlarging and strengthening the already extensive pattern of exchanges between Canada and Israel. There is always much more to be done, but we are on the right road and moving in the right direction. I don't think at times, in our preoccupation with regional conflicts that we ought to overlook paying close and constructive attention to the bilateral relationship. These are fundamental and ought to be continued. My assessment of my visit to Jerusalem was that it was an exchange of views among friends. I think this view was shared with my interlocutors in Israel - the Prime Minister, Defence Minister Arens and President Herzog. Following my visit, Prime Minister Trudeau received a letter from Prime Minister Shamir describing our talks as friendly and constructive and that we had surveyed a whole range of problems in our area and the various facets of Canadian Israeli relations. In that communication, Prime Minister Shamir went on to express the hope that, as a result of this tour d'horizon, there will be ongoing discussion at government level with a view to strengthening our relationship, especially in economic matters, where there is room for improvement and undoubtedly great potential. I agree with Prime Minister Sharmir on the great potential for future cooperation in economic matters. I regard bilateral relations to be of supreme importance.

If the bilateral scene we reviewed together was encouraging, our examination of regional problems produced a more sombre assessment. In Israel as in the Arab countries I visited, I found anxiety and doubts, and an almost tangible sense of frustration that peace has remained so elusive while violence recurs only too easily and too frequently. As you will remember, I was in the Middle East when the vicious terrorist assaults on the headquarters in Beirut of the United States and French contingents of the Multi-National Force took place. In fact I had been in Beirut the day before. These senseless outrages, so costly in innocent lives, were very much on our minds as my Israeli hosts spoke of their concern about dangers to their country's security, through Lebanon and