

Our response is not simply an act of faith, an ingrained reflex from an earlier more positive era in UN diplomacy. It is based on a realistic analysis of what the UN is doing. Broadly speaking the main areas are peace and security and functional cooperation.

How well is the UN doing in the key area of peace and security? Not very, must be the answer. Wars rage in the Middle East. The occupation of Afghanistan and Kampuchea continues. A Caribbean island is invaded, and conflicts fester in Central America. Moreover, in recent years the Security Council has become increasingly paralysed due to the unsatisfactory relationship between the two Superpowers. This has resulted in some cases in the UN being deliberately by-passed on security issues. Clearly the UN has to do better on high profile peace and security issues if it is to gain maximum support in the international community and with our publics.

We must not, however, fall victim to exaggerated expectations. There is little point in blaming the UN itself for the sins and omissions of its member states - for the inability of those who wield a veto to agree among themselves. Equally important, we must not lose sight of the significant contributions that the UN has made, and can continue to make, to the maintenance of peace and security.

For example, if and when peaceful solutions do come to the Middle East and Namibia, they will be based squarely upon balanced Security Council resolutions. Resolution 242, passed in 1967, provides for withdrawal from occupied territories and the right of all states in the Middle East, including Israel, to exist in security and peace. This is the basic structure upon which the Egypt-Israel peace treaty was built, and upon which any peace settlement enabling the Palestinian people to achieve their legitimate rights will also have to be based. Resolution 435, passed in 1978, sets out in detail the steps which can lead to a Namibia truly independent of South Africa. Canada remains deeply involved in the efforts of the Secretary-General to implement the UN plan. No other scheme appears feasible and acceptable to the International community.

Canadians continue to serve in UN peacekeeping forces and observer missions that are making positive contributions to stability in the Middle East and Cyprus. We are ready to participate in Namibia to help oversee the independence process and would expand our participation in the Middle East if the conditions for effectiveness were achieved.