

At last, the UN has had a chance to work in the way that its founders envisaged. From the beginning of the crisis, the Security Council has demonstrated determination and resolve. It has adopted a series of resolutions and in doing so initiated actions that were clearly set out in the UN Charter as appropriate responses to aggression. It has done this with the support of all the Permanent Members of the Council; indeed the key decisions have been unanimous on the part of its Members.

The UN's handling of this crisis shows that the world body can work. But it must follow through. Otherwise, the fresh start which the end of the cold war has permitted the UN could come to a crashing halt.

The international consensus opposed to Iraq's use of force to occupy and annex a sovereign state, and to hold against their will thousands of citizens of third countries, including Canada, is the broadest and most complete consensus the world has seen in the modern era.

There is a firm international resolve that innocent bystanders must be released and that Iraq's occupation of Kuwait must be reversed. Iraq is isolated. Now, compliance with the Security Council's resolutions is the critical need.

The Security Council resolutions have established a comprehensive, obligatory set of economic sanctions as the means to bring this about by convincing Iraq that it must withdraw and restore Kuwait's legitimate sovereignty. The Council has authorized necessary enforcement measures to make the sanctions as effective as possible. Over 25 countries have now contributed forces to participate in enforcement of the UN sanctions and to deter further aggression by Iraq.

Even before the Council could act, however, Saudi Arabia faced an immediate critical need to defend itself. Saddam Hussein's armies were massing menacingly on the Saudi border with the ability to attack towards the vast, vital and tempting Saudi oil fields. Faced with this imminent threat, the Government of Saudi Arabia appealed for international assistance to defend itself. The U.S. and others responded properly and immediately to the Saudi concern, with obvious effect.