

- The Council for Development and Reconstruction is completing the final draft of a five-year construction plan, which includes an estimated \$5.6 billion worth of projects in waste-water treatment, housing, education, transportation, hospital management and environmental protection. International financial institutions, including the World Bank, are contributing funds which will create opportunities for Canadian companies in infrastructure projects.
- Opportunities exist for Canadian companies in Lebanon in the agri-food, hydroelectric energy, telecommunications, construction and building materials, transport, and environment sectors.
- Canadian investment in Lebanon totalled about \$25 million in 1999, concentrated primarily in the service sector. Over 20 Canadian companies are currently active in Lebanon, including SNC Lavalin, Bata Industries, Nortel Networks, Harris Communications, National Bank of Canada, CRC Sogema, IBI Group, ABL Canada, and BA Banknote.

Development Assistance

- The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) began supporting Lebanon's reconstruction following the 1975-90 civil war. Contributions to date amount to about \$38 million. CIDA's priorities in Lebanon are to help satisfy basic human needs and support the peace process. This year's bilateral expenditures will total \$1.5 million.
- Current projects include reforming Lebanon's taxation system in co-operation with the Ministry of Finance, creation of a business administration training program in co-operation with the Hariri Foundation, and support for the Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives. The fund, which supports community development, generally focuses on the most disadvantaged groups in the country, including poor rural families, the handicapped and Palestinian refugees. CIDA has recently confirmed its participation in an international scholarship program for Palestinian women and refugees in Lebanon.
- In 1999, through a \$15 million contribution to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, CIDA helped to increase basic services to Palestinian refugees in the region, of whom 370,000 are living in Lebanon. An additional \$880,000 was spent over the past two years for social services and shelter to alleviate the plight of refugees in Lebanon.