

selves on a particular issue. Indeed, as you are aware, there are times when we do not hesitate to vote entirely alone with Israel if we consider this justified.

Two resolutions last year attracted particular attention; first, the resolution (which we supported) deploring Israel's policy of establishing settlements in territories occupied in June 1967; and, secondly, the Egyptian resolution (which we also supported) calling for an early resumption of the Geneva Peace Conference.

In explaining our vote on the resolution concerning the establishment of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories, we referred to a quite separate resolution that set out a timetable for Israeli withdrawal from the territories and a mechanism for turning the West Bank over to the FLO (Palestine Liberation Organization). We voted against that resolution on the grounds that it negated Resolution 242 and would be dictating the terms of a solution that must be settled by negotiations. So too, in our opinion, the establishment of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories amounted to an attempt to predetermine the eventual borders of Israel before negotiations had even begun. We believe that secure and recognized borders can only be secured by negotiations — not by one party staking out its claim ahead of time. Moreover, we were (and are) of the view that these settlements contravene both the Geneva Conventions applicable to territories occupied as a result of armed conflict and Resolution 242, which calls, *inter alia*, for withdrawal from those territories and reaffirms the principle of non-acquisition of territory by war. The settlements, if only because of the extensive infrastructure and financial and human investment that support them, constitute a presumption of permanency, going beyond the temporary security considerations that were initially advanced in their justification.

Another resolution on which our vote attracted some criticism was that sponsored by Egypt, together with a number of other Third World countries, during last December's General Assembly debate on the situation in the Middle East, which called for the early reconvening of the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East. We supported that resolution. Some critics thought we should not have done so because it implicitly authorized the Secretary-General to include the PLO in future consultations on the Middle East. We should certainly have preferred an explicit reference to 242 and, if we had drafted the resolution ourselves, there would have been one, if only because Security Council Resolution 338 of 1974 made it clear that the Geneva Conference should use 242 as the framework for negotiations. However, the call for a return to Geneva was one with which we could not possibly disagree. Canada too considers it of cardinal importance to get negotiations started — the sooner the better!

The implicit reference to consultations with the PLO also bothered us, as such references always do. We do not recognize the PLO and we do not see any constructive role for that organization in the negotiating process unless its spokesmen accept the right of Israel to exist and all the principles of Security Council Resolution 242. Had this resolution insisted that the PLO participate in the Geneva Conference as sole representative of the Palestinian people and without also insisting that they be committed to peace with Israel based on the principles of Resolution 242, we could not have supported it.

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