

On August 2, Saddam Hussein launched a war against Kuwait. His invasion and subsequent annexation of Kuwait are grievous violations of the most basic principles of international law and of human decency. We are here, today, to reaffirm Canada's support for the United Nations' efforts to bring those violations to an end.

On October 23, the House approved sending members, vessels and aircraft of the Canadian Forces to participate in the multinational military effort in the Persian Gulf. On November 29, the House passed a further motion supporting "the United Nations in its efforts to ensure compliance with U.N. Security Council resolution 660 and subsequent resolutions", notably Resolution 678 co-sponsored by Canada and passed the same day at the United Nations. Resolution 678 gives Saddam Hussein "one final opportunity" to comply with the will of the world community, as expressed in successive U.N. resolutions.

The 47 day "pause for peace" provided for in Resolution 678 ends tonight. As I speak, efforts continue at the UN on a proposal that contains elements that are similar to ideas advanced in writing by Canada to the U.N. Secretary General last week.

Diplomacy has been and is still being given every chance. Following U.S. Secretary Baker's unsuccessful meeting with Iraqi Foreign Minister Aziz last week in Geneva, the Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. Perez de Cuellar, made the second of two visits to the Middle East on this issue. His appeal to Saddam Hussein to leave Kuwait was callously rebuffed once again.

Mr. Perez de Cuellar told journalists yesterday that he saw "no reason to have any real hope". He has reported that Saddam Hussein "never mentioned...that he was prepared to withdraw from Kuwait." No one could have failed to notice Saddam Hussein's contempt for international opinion, international law and common decency.

United Nations Resolution 678 authorizes member states to use all necessary means to uphold and implement the relevant U.N. resolutions on this crisis and to restore international peace and security in the area. Resolution 678 -- approved by this House on November 29 -- also requests all member states including Canada to provide "appropriate support" for actions taken in pursuance of this goal.

The choice of peace or war remains Saddam Hussein's, as it has for the past five-and-a-half months, but time is running out on him. Regardless of how they cast their votes last November 29, Members on all sides of the House hoped hostilities would not be necessary. But it was clear to us all then that we might have to impose the ultimate sanction on Saddam Hussein -- military force -- if he did not withdraw his forces from Kuwait.

The U.N. made the threat of the use of force to persuade Saddam Hussein of the seriousness of its determination to see him out of Kuwait. It was not an empty gesture. The question before Canadians now is a simple one: if Saddam Hussein does not withdraw peacefully from Kuwait, and the use of force is required, where will Canada stand? On this simple question of right and wrong, will we continue to support the international coalition or will we stand aside and hope that others will uphold the