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Visit to Canada of Israeli Prime
Minister Yitzhak Rabin : November
16-18, 1993. --

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**Visit to Canada of
Israeli Prime Minister
Yitzhak Rabin
November 16-18, 1993**

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**CANADIAN PEACEKEEPING IN THE
MIDDLE EAST**

Peacekeeping has given Canada extensive and continuing contact with the Middle East since 1954. Indeed, Canada played a central role in defusing the Suez Crisis and introducing the modern-day concept of UN peacekeeping in 1956. Lester B. Pearson was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his involvement in that breakthrough. Canada has participated in every United Nations peacekeeping operation in the Middle East region.

Currently, Canada is participating in the following peacekeeping and other related missions in the Middle East and Maghreb:

***UN Truce Supervisory Organization (UNTSO):** observing and reporting on 1948 armistice and violations in Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria; from 1954 to present; 13 Canadian personnel currently assigned.

***United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF):** supervising Israeli-Syrian disengagement in Golan Heights; from 1974 to present; 180 Canadian personnel currently serving.

***Multinational Force and Observers (MFO):** monitoring disengagement zones between Israel and Egypt under Camp David Accords; from 1986 to present; 27 Canadian personnel currently serving.

***UN Iraq/Kuwait Observer Mission (UNIKOM):** deployed in Kuwait in connection with Gulf War ceasefire; from May 1991 to present; 45 Canadian personnel currently serving.

***United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM):** investigating Iraq's weapons of mass destruction pursuant Gulf War ceasefire agreements; Canadian personnel have participated in many of the 45 international inspections in Iraq to date.

***Mission des Nations Unies pour l'organisation d'un référendum au Sahara Occidental (MINURSO):** mandated to conduct a referendum on Western Saharan independence or integration with Morocco; 33 Canadian personnel currently serving.

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Previous UN Forces in the Middle East, in which Canada has participated are:

	Location	Dates	Maximum Troops Contribution
UN Emergency Force (UNEF-1)	Egypt	1956-67	1 007
UN Observer Group in Lebanon (UNOGIL)	Lebanon	1958-59	77
UN Yemen Observer Mission (UNYOM)	Yemen	1963-64	36
UN Emergency Force (UNEF II) (Sinai)	Egypt	1973-79	1 145
UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)	Lebanon	1978 (Apr to Sep)	117
UN Iran/Iraq Military Observer Group (UNIMOG)	Iran/Iraq	1988-91	510

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CANADIAN DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

- * Canadian development assistance in the Middle East was initiated in 1950 with our first contribution to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). Canadian Major General Howard Kennedy was its first Commissioner General in 1949.
- * Since then, over \$770 million in development assistance has been directed to the Middle East through a range of programs.
- * Our total assistance to the Middle East in general has averaged \$50 million per year.
- * Canada will contribute \$55 million to Gaza and the West Bank over the next five years in support of the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organization Peace Accord. This represents a 40 percent increase in Canada's direct assistance to the West Bank and Gaza.

BILATERAL ASSISTANCE

- * Canadian bilateral assistance was a result of our strong support for the Camp David Peace Accords between Egypt and Israel. This led to our first bilateral program in Egypt in 1976.
- * In the mid-1980s, Canada responded to Jordan's increasingly important role in the region with a development program initially centred around efforts by Petro Canada International to assist Jordan in natural gas exploration and in diversifying its resource base. Assistance to Jordan since then has averaged \$7 million per year.
- * The Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (or Canada Fund) amounts to \$3.5 million annually and complements the Canadian International Development Agency's (CIDA) bilateral programs with a locally administered, rapid, flexible fund to respond to grass-roots needs. The fund is administered by Canadian embassies in Amman, Ankara, Cairo, Damascus, Riyadh, and Tel Aviv (for the Occupied Territories).

MULTILATERAL

- * Canadian multilateral assistance also has been an integral part of our support for peace and stability in the region. Our total multilateral assistance has averaged \$30 million per year.
- * This assistance is channelled through such agencies as the International Committee of the Red Cross (approximately \$1 million per year for activities in areas including Lebanon and the Occupied Territories); the Middle East Council of Churches (approximately \$700,000 per year) and others.
- * Our contribution to UNRWA, which channels its assistance to the Palestinians in the Occupied Territories, averages \$11 million per year.

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RESPONSE TO GULF CRISIS

- * In an immediate response to the hardships resulting from the Gulf Crisis in 1990-91, Canada made available a \$77.5 million package of emergency assistance to Jordan, Egypt and Turkey, the countries that suffered some of the worst repercussions of the crisis.
- * This assistance included gas masks for Palestinians in the Occupied Territories and emergency food assistance.
- * In addition, Canada has in place a \$46.75 million program of post-Gulf War humanitarian and economic assistance, which is being implemented during the period 1991-96.

MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS

- * Above and beyond our substantial aid contribution to the Middle East, Canada created two additional funds in 1992, which are designed to provide further assistance and to create confidence in the Peace Process itself.
- * The Canada Fund for Dialogue and Development promotes co-operation and confidence building (through seminars, workshops, etc.) on key development issues related to the Peace Process.
- * The Expert Advisory Services Fund (administered by the International Development Research Centre) is designed to apply the unique knowledge and ability of experts and academics to the search for solutions in the region. For example, Canada financed technical research by officials of the Palestinian negotiating team because it helped those genuinely pursuing peace in the region to participate more constructively in the process.
- * Both funds were created by CIDA and to date have dispersed over \$1 million in direct Canadian and joint international activities as part of Canada's role in the Middle East Peace Process.
- * The \$55 million contribution for Gaza and the West Bank will be used to respond to the immediate needs and long-term priorities of the Palestinians in areas such as family reunification, election assistance, water management and environmental sustainability, and institution building.

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PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Regional Instability, Global Implications

The Middle East, straddling vital transportation links at the confluence of three continents, has long been a region of strategic importance. More recently, unrivalled concentrations of oil have bestowed on it a vital role in the world economy. The persistent violence and conflict that have plagued the Middle East for more than 40 years, and the tragic humanitarian conditions that have ensued, have been a critical concern for the entire international community.

The Arab-Israeli Conflict

The causes of strife in the Middle East are many and complex. One of the principal causes has been the conflict between Israel and its Arab neighbours: a formal declaration of war has been upheld by most Arab states against Israel since its founding in 1948. Since the 1967 Six-Day War, this conflict was exacerbated by Israel's occupation of territories in the Sinai, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the eastern sector of Jerusalem and the Golan Heights. Aside from the Camp David Accords and the Israel-Egypt peace agreement, which led to Israel's withdrawal from the Sinai in 1982, attempts to resolve the conflict have repeatedly failed. The significance of these accords, however, must be noted because they served as a blueprint for the ongoing peace process.

The Madrid Peace Process:

A) Bilateral Negotiations

The Madrid Peace Process, launched by the United States and the former Soviet Union in October 1991, is the latest effort to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. For the first time since the creation of Israel, Madrid brought together Arab, Israeli and Palestinian representatives to address the question of peace. It also produced a series of bilateral negotiations between Israel and its neighbours, --namely Jordan, Syria and Lebanon -- and the Palestinians.

Eleven rounds of bilateral negotiations have been held in Washington. These negotiations have been long and difficult, reflecting the depth of emotions on all sides and the compromises that must be made to ensure a durable peace. The Israel-PLO Declaration of Principles, signed in Washington on September 13, 1993, and the Israel-Jordan Common Agenda, signed on September 14, were momentous breakthroughs, launching a new beginning for the Middle East. Similar progress is expected with Lebanon and Syria.

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B) Multilateral Negotiations

In Moscow, in January 1992, the United States and Russia launched the next phase of the Madrid Peace Process. Foreign ministers and delegates from 36 countries, including countries from the Middle East, along with representatives from Europe, Japan, China and Canada, began a series of multilateral negotiations.

The purpose of the talks is to focus on issues of regional concern and to take concerted action in addressing them. The negotiations will likely take on a key role in co-ordinating assistance to support the Israel-PLO agreement.

Five working groups have been established to deal with areas of pressing concern:

- 1) Arms Control and Security;
- 2) Economic Development;
- 3) Refugees;
- 4) Water Resources; and
- 5) Environment.

Canada chairs the Refugee Working Group, whose mandate is to improve the lives of people displaced by the Arab-Israeli conflict. Canada hosted the first two meetings. Norway hosted the third, and the fourth met in Tunisia, October 12-14, 1993.

Canada also participates in the other four working groups, and hosted, in September, a special workshop on Maritime Confidence Building Measures, under the aegis of the Arms Control and Security Working Group.

Canada is also a member of the Multilateral Steering Group, which reviews the work of the five working groups and plans future meetings. The Steering Group met in Moscow in July, 1993.

Canada's Approach

As one of the non-regional parties participating in the multilateral phase of the peace process, Canada's principal aim has been to keep the peace process moving forward and to support bilateral agreements. Responsibility for resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict ultimately rests with the parties involved in the bilateral negotiations. The multilateral negotiations are not a substitute for those talks.

However, the multilateral negotiations do offer an opportunity for the parties to understand the tangible benefits to be gained from an eventual overall political settlement. Canada, with its practical expertise in dealing with such issues as refugees, disarmament and water resource management, along with its longstanding peacekeeping experience in the Middle East and its positive relations with parties in the region, has contributed significantly to the peace process. The multilateral negotiations have also offered a unique opportunity for the adversaries in the conflict to make the personal contacts needed for progress in bilateral negotiations. It was through such contacts that Israelis and Palestinians initiated the discussions that led to their bilateral breakthrough.

The First Meeting of the Refugee Working Group, Ottawa, May 13-15, 1992

Canada was both host and gavel at the first meeting of the Refugee Working Group, held in Ottawa, May 13-15. Thirty-five delegations attended. In spite of the absence of key regional parties (Israel, Syria and Lebanon), the participants agreed that the working group should address the human needs of people displaced by the Arab-Israeli conflict. Delegates agreed to explore concrete action in such areas as databases, human resource development, family reunification, economic and social infrastructure development, child welfare, public health, vocational training and job creation.

The Second Meeting of the Refugee Working Group, Ottawa, November 11-12, 1992

For the first time, the United Nations and Israel were represented at a meeting of the Refugee Working Group. Substantial agreement was reached on three of the seven themes, but no consensus was achieved on the fourth, family reunification.

The Third Meeting of the Refugee Working Group, Oslo, May 11-13, 1993

Discussion on all seven areas resumed in Oslo, where progress was made on all issues, notably family reunification, public health and child welfare. Consensus was reached on a fact-finding mission to the region on family reunification.

The Fourth Meeting of the Refugee Working Group, Tunis, October 12-14, 1993

It was the first time a meeting of the Refugee Working Group was held in the Middle East. Coming after the September signing of the Israel-PLO Peace Accord, the atmosphere was exceptionally co-operative. There was a consensus that rapid and visible changes on the ground are absolutely essential and that refugee communities in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria must not be overlooked.

The Refugee Working Group operates by consensus, within the terms of reference set by the whole group. All the participants recognize that any steps to be taken at this stage will of necessity be modest, and that the multilaterals can be an adjunct to, but never a substitute for, the bilateral talks.

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**THE ARAB-ISRAELI DISPUTE AND CANADIAN SUPPORT
FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST: A CHRONOLOGY**1947

- April Britain announces its intention to end its Mandate for Palestine (established under the former League of Nations) by August 1948. The United Nations takes up the problem.
- Canada's Mr. Justice Ivan Rand participates in the UN Special Committee of Observation on Palestine (UNSCOP), which recommends a plan for a partition of mandatory Palestine into two states, one Arab and one Jewish, with economic union and with Jerusalem as an international zone administered by the UN. The plan is welcomed by Jews of Palestine but opposed by Arabs.
- November Canada votes in favour of UN General Assembly Resolution 181, approving a plan for partition of Palestine.

1948

- May The State of Israel is declared by a provisional government on May 15 amidst what would become the first Arab-Israeli War.
- December Canada grants de facto recognition to Israel.

1949

- May Canada votes in favour of admitting Israel as a member to the UN.
- October Canada's Major-General Howard Kennady is the first Commissioner General of the newly established UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

1954-56

Canada's Major-General E.L.M. Burns heads the UN Truce Supervisory Organization (UNTSO), which had been established in 1948 "to observe and maintain the cease-fire and to assist in the supervision and observance of the General Armistice Agreement concluded between Israel and Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan and Syria." (Canada currently provides 13 observers to UNTSO.)

1956 Defusing the Suez Crisis and introducing the modern-day concept of UN peacekeeping operations, Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs (SSEA), Lester B. Pearson, initiates a UN Resolution establishing the UN Emergency Force (UNEF-I) to supervise withdrawal of French, Israeli and British troops from Egyptian territory and subsequently observe demarcation lines and the frontier in Sinai between Israeli and Egyptian forces. General Burns is appointed UNEF's Chief of Staff.

1957 Lester B. Pearson receives the Nobel Peace Prize for his contribution to UN peacekeeping efforts in the Middle East.

1956-67 Canada contributes signals and air transport units, numbering some 1000 of the 6000-troop total in UNEF-I.

1967

June The Six-Day War in the Middle East; Israel occupies East Jerusalem, the West Bank, Gaza, part of the Golan Heights and Sinai.

July Canada votes in favour of UN General Assembly Resolution 2253, which condemns the unilateral alteration by Israel of the status of Jerusalem.

November Canada, as a member of the UN Security Council, votes for Resolution 242, which recognizes the right of all states to exist within secure and recognized boundaries and the need for Israeli withdrawal from territories occupied in the recent conflict.

1973

October The third Arab-Israeli War (the "Yom Kippur War") is followed by the establishment of UNEF-II, mandated to supervise the Israeli-Egyptian cease-fire and troop withdrawals. UNEF-II was withdrawn in 1979 following the Camp David Accords. Canada contributed 1150 men to the 6000-troop force.

The UN Security Council adopts Resolution 338, calling for the implementation of Resolution 242 and the start of "negotiations between the parties concerned under appropriate auspices aimed at establishing a just and durable peace in the Middle East." This principle has been a consistent feature of Canada's Middle East policy.

1974 The UN Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) is put in place to control a neutral zone set up under the agreement establishing Israeli-Syrian disengagement in the Golan Heights following the 1973 war. This operation remains in place today, with 180 Canadian troops providing communication, logistical and technical services to the 1330-member force.

October/
November Canada abstains on UN Resolution 3210, which invites the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) to participate in UN General Assembly deliberations, and Canada opposes Resolution 3236, which accords the PLO observer status in the General Assembly and all international conferences.

1975

November Canada opposes UN Resolution 3379, which states that Zionism is a form of racism.

1976

January Canada's SSEA, the Honourable Allan MacEachen, undertakes a tour of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Iraq and Israel.

1977

October Canada's SSEA, the Honourable Don Jamieson, undertakes a fact-finding mission to Egypt and Israel.

1978

September The Camp David Accords, a peace agreement between Egypt and Israel is signed which leads to the 1982 withdrawal of Israeli forces from Sinai. However, the framework for addressing the Palestinian problem ultimately produces no results.

Following the Israeli invasion of southern Lebanon, the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) is established to confirm Israeli withdrawal and help Lebanon to restore effective authority in the region. Canada contributed 117 troops for the first six months.

1980

February The Honourable Robert Stanfield submits his final report on Canadian relations with the Middle East and North Africa.

1982

June After the June 6 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the House of Commons adopts a unanimous motion of support for UN Security Council Resolution 509, which calls for the withdrawal of Israeli troops to the boundaries of Lebanon.

1983

October Canada's SSEA, Allan MacEachen, visits Syria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Israel.

1985

At the request of Israel and Egypt, Canada begins participation in the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO), a peacekeeping force established in the Sinai Peninsula in 1982 under the Camp David Accords. Canada provided eight helicopters, crew and support until 1990, when the MFO initiated withdrawal of the helicopters as a cost-cutting measure. Currently, 27 Canadians serve with this mission.

1986

April Canada's SSEA, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, visits Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Israel.

December Canada supports the call to convene an international peace conference, if properly prepared, as a mechanism for concrete progress in a peace process.

1987

December A Palestinian uprising (Intifada) begins in territories occupied by Israel since 1967.

1988

February The House of Commons Standing Committee on External Affairs visits Jordan, Egypt and Israel.

December Canada abstains on UN General Assembly Resolution 43/177 concerning a Palestinian state; the Palestinian state proclaimed by the Palestine National Council at Algiers in November 1988 is not recognized by Canada.

1989

March The Right Honourable Joe Clark, announces the lifting of restrictions on the level of contact with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Canadian support for the principle of Palestinian self-determination in the context of peace negotiations.

June The President of Israel, Chaim Herzog, makes a state visit to Canada.

October His Majesty, King Hussein Bin Talal, of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, makes a state visit to Canada.

1990

August to December Canada, as a member of the UN Security Council, votes in favour of Resolutions 660, 661, 662, 664, 665, 666, 667, 669, 670, 674, 677 and 678, in support of UN action to resolve the Gulf crisis.

November The Right Honourable Joe Clark, visits Turkey, Jordan, Egypt and Israel.

1991

January to March Canada participates in a Coalition in support of UN action to resolve the Gulf crisis. Canada provides \$500 000 in humanitarian aid through the Canadian Red Cross to its Israeli counterpart, Magen David Adom, and 10 000 gas masks for distribution through UNRWA to Palestinians in the Occupied Territories.

March The Right Honourable Joe Clark, visits Jordan, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Syria and Iran.

October Launched by the U.S. and the then U.S.S.R., the first session of the Middle East peace conference takes place in Madrid. It brings together representatives of the Arab states, Israel and the Palestinians. Prime Minister Brian Mulroney announces that Canada has accepted an invitation to participate in the multilateral phase of the conference.

1992

January The first session of the multilateral round of the Middle East peace negotiations takes place in Moscow. Canada's SSEA, the Honourable Barbara McDougall, leads the Canadian delegation. Canada takes a leading role in the organization of the Refugee Working Group, in the context of the multilateral phase of the peace process. Canada agrees to host the next meeting of this group in May 1992.

March King Hussein of Jordan pays a three-day working visit to Ottawa. Topics discussed include Canada's role in the peace process.

April Israeli Deputy Prime Minister, Moshe Nissim, visits Ottawa; meets with the SSEA, the Honourable Barbara McDougall, and with Canada's Minister of Industry, Science and Technology and Minister for International Trade and Industry, the Honourable Michael Wilson.

The Minister for External Relations and International Development, the Honourable Monique Landry, visits Jordan, Egypt and Morocco.

May The fifth round of Middle East bilateral peace negotiations concludes in Washington, D.C.

The five working groups of the multilateral phase of the Middle East peace process are convened:

- 1) Economic Development: Brussels, May 11-13
- 2) Arms Control and Security: Washington, May 11-13
- 3) Refugees: Ottawa, May 13-15
- 4) Water Resources: Vienna, May 13-15
- 5) Environment: Tokyo, May 18-19

The multilateral peace negotiations Steering Group meets in Lisbon, May 25.

Canada's cumulative total contribution to UNRWA since 1950 exceeds \$202 million.

August The sixth round of bilateral negotiations reconvenes in Washington, August 24.

September The second substantive round of multilateral negotiations begins. The Working Group on Water Resources meets on September 15-16 in Washington, and the Working Group on Arms Control and Security meets in Moscow, September 15-17.

The sixth round of bilateral negotiations ends on September 24.

October The seventh round of bilateral negotiations reconvenes in Washington on October 21, with a recess from October 29 to November 9.

The Multilateral Working Group on the Environment meets in the Hague on October 26-27. The Working Group on Economic Development meets in Paris on October 29-30.

November The Working Group on Refugees meets in Ottawa on November 11-12.

The seventh round of bilateral negotiations ends on November 19.

December The eighth round of bilateral negotiations is held in Washington.

The Multilateral Peace Negotiations Steering Group meets in London.

1993

March Invitations are extended for the ninth round of bilateral negotiations scheduled to start April 20 in Washington.

May The Multilateral Working Group on Refugees meets in Oslo, May 11-13.

August The tenth round of bilateral negotiations is held in Washington.

September The eleventh round of bilateral negotiations is held in Washington.

The Government of Israel and the PLO recognize each other officially on September 9, 1993.

The Declaration of Principles is signed by Israel and the PLO. The SSEA, the Honourable Perrin Beatty, represents Canada at the signing ceremony at the White House on September 13.

The Common Agenda is signed by Jordan and Israel, in Washington, on September 14.

Canada hosts a special workshop on Maritime Confidence Building Measures in Sydney, Nova Scotia, September 11-13.

October The Working Group on Refugees meets in Tunis, October 12-14.

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**CANADA-ISRAEL BILATERAL RELATIONS**

Canada has strongly supported the State of Israel since its foundation in 1948 and is firmly committed to that country's well-being as an independent state in the Middle East, within secure and recognized boundaries. Over the years, we have developed a broad framework of agreements and understandings with Israel on such diverse matters as cultural relations, agriculture, trade, industrial research and development, health and Canadian studies.

The depth of our relationship is exemplified by numerous official links and a vast range of private contacts. In 1989, President and Mrs. Herzog made a state visit to Canada, and, in November 1990 and March 1991, the Secretary of State for External Affairs (SSEA) visited Israel. The SSEA also meets regularly with the Israeli Foreign Minister, notably on the margins of the United Nations General Assembly. In March 1993, Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres made an official visit to Canada. There have also been frequent exchanges of official visits by federal and provincial cabinet ministers and members of Parliament. In addition, tens of thousands of Canadians and Israelis exchange private visits each year.

During the recent Gulf crisis, Canada contributed \$500 000 in humanitarian assistance to Israel. The contribution was channelled through the Canadian Red Cross to its Israeli counterpart, the Magen David Adom, for the purchase of emergency medical equipment and other relief supplies. At the request of the Israeli government, Canada also provided 10 000 gas masks to the Occupied Territories.

Trade remains an important aspect of the relationship. Israel is one of Canada's largest trading partners in the Middle East and its third-largest source of imports from the region. Two-way trade for 1992 was reasonably balanced. Canada and Israel both actively promote their exports and have signed a number of agreements, memoranda of understanding and a taxation treaty to encourage further trade. In April 1992, a Joint Economic Commission was held in Ottawa; the next meeting is scheduled for March 1994. The composition of Canadian exports reflects a balanced mix of industrial raw materials and fully manufactured goods. Leading Canadian exports include crude and refined sulphur, aluminium, lumber, aircraft engines, and copper and zinc products. Israel's largest exports to Canada include diamonds, appliances, yarns, agricultural products and medical equipment.

During the visit of Foreign Minister Peres, agreement was reached on a Canada-Israel Industrial Research and Development Fund, which commits each country to provide \$5 million over three years to stimulate bilateral industrial and technical co-operation.

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ISRAEL FACT SHEET

- Area: 20 770 km² (not including the Occupied Territories)
- Population: About 4.4 million, of whom approximately 748 000 are Arabs; growth rate for 1989 was 1.5 percent.
- Religion: 83 per cent Judaism, 13 percent Islam, 2 percent Christianity and 2 percent other.
- Languages: Hebrew and Arabic are the official languages; English is widely spoken.
- Government: In Israel, supreme authority rests with the Knesset, a unicameral legislative body with 120 members elected for a four-year term. Knesset consent is required for the installation of a new Cabinet, which must resign on losing confidence. The president is elected by the Knesset.
- Head of State: President Ezer Weizman
- Head of Government: Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin
- Foreign Minister: Shimon Peres
- GNP: C\$9576 per capita
- Trade with Canada: Two-way trade for 1992 was reasonably balanced. Canada exported \$116 million of goods to Israel and imported \$131 million. Our main exports are sulphur, aluminium, lumber and manufactured goods. Major imports to Canada are diamonds, appliances and agricultural products.

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**His Excellency Yitzhak Rabin
Prime Minister and Minister of Defence
of the State of Israel**

Yitzhak Rabin was born in Jerusalem in 1922. He studied at the Kadoorie Agricultural College, where he graduated with distinction.

His military career began in 1940 when he joined the "Palmach," the elite unit of the Haganah. During the War of Independence (1948-49), he commanded the Harel Brigade, deployed on the Jerusalem front. For the next 20 years, he served with the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) as Officer in Command at the Northern Command (1956-59), as Chief of Operations and Deputy Chief of Staff (1959-64); and as Chief of Staff (1964-68), commanding the IDF during the Six-Day War in 1967.

On January 1, 1968, Mr. Rabin retired from military service and shortly afterwards, was appointed Ambassador to the United States. During his years in Washington, he promoted and consolidated the ties between the two countries.

In the spring of 1973, Mr. Rabin returned to Israel and became active in the Labour Party. He was elected Member of the Knesset in December 1973, and when Mrs. Golda Meir formed her government in April 1974, was appointed Minister of Labour.

On June 2, 1974, he became Prime Minister when the Knesset expressed confidence in a new government that he had been asked to form.

During Mr. Rabin's premiership, the Government placed special emphasis on strengthening the economy, solving social problems and reinforcing the IDF.

With U.S. mediation, disengagement agreements were signed with Egypt and Syria in 1974, followed by an interim agreement with Egypt in 1975. Later that year, the first Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the governments of Israel and the United States.

In June 1976, Mr. Rabin's government issued the order for "Operation Entebbe," liberating the passengers of a hijacked Air France flight.

Following the May 1977 elections and until the formation of the National Unity Government in September 1984, Mr. Rabin served as a Knesset Member of the Labour Party in opposition and was a member of the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee.

In the National Unity governments (1984-90), Mr. Rabin served as Minister of Defence. In January 1985, he presented the proposal for the withdrawal of the IDF from Lebanon and the establishment of a security zone to guarantee peace to the settlements along Israel's northern border.

Yitzhak Rabin was elected chairman of the Israel Labour Party in its first nationwide primaries in February 1992 and led the party to victory in the June 1992 general elections. In July 1992, Mr. Rabin formed Israel's 25th Government and became its 11th Prime Minister. He also became Minister of Defence, and acting Minister of Religious Affairs and Labour and Social Affairs.

Mr. Rabin's biographical book "Service Notebook," was published in 1979 and was translated into English and French.

His book on Lebanon, written after "Operation Peace for Galilee," was published in 1983.

Source: Embassy of Israel
November 1993



CANADA'S POSITION ON KEY ISSUES

The main principles that govern Canadian policies toward the Arab-Israeli dispute are:

Security of Israel

Canada supports the security, well-being and rights of Israel as a legitimate, independent state. This has been a fundamental aspect of the policy of successive Canadian governments since the foundation of the State of Israel in 1948.

Support for a Comprehensive Peace Settlement

Canada firmly supports the Israel-PLO Peace Agreement signed on September 13, 1993. The Agreement should become a comprehensive agreement based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, including the right of all countries in the region to live within secure and recognized boundaries and the requirement for Israeli withdrawal from territories occupied in 1967. Canada also firmly supports the Israel-Jordan Peace Agenda, signed on September 14, 1993.

Occupied Territories

Canada does not recognize permanent Israeli control over the territories occupied in 1967 (the Golan Heights, the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip) and opposes all unilateral actions intended to predetermine the outcome of negotiations, including the establishment of settlements in the territories and unilateral moves to annex East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights. Canada considers such actions to be contrary to international law and unproductive to the peace process.

Rights of Palestinians

Canada recognizes that the legitimate rights of the Palestinians must be realized, including the right to self-determination to be exercised through peace negotiations.

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The Palestine Liberation Organization

Canada recognizes the PLO as the principal representative of the Palestinian people. Because Canada has never enforced a ban on all contacts, Canadian officials have met with PLO representatives on various occasions. Previous restrictions on the level of Canadian contacts with the PLO were lifted on March 30, 1989.

Palestinian Autonomy

Canada fully supports the Israel-PLO Peace Agreement signed on September 13, 1993. Canada does not recognize the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, as announced in Algiers, in November 1988. Canada's position, however, does not exclude the creation of a Palestinian state if that were decided by the parties through negotiations.

Support for Fair-minded Peace Initiatives

Canada firmly supports constructive peace initiatives, such as the Camp David Accords of 1979, the Reagan initiative of September 1982, and the Madrid bilateral negotiations launched in October 1991 by the United States and the former Soviet Union. Canada has also supported the Fez Declaration of the 1982 Arab Summit, calling for Security Council guarantees for all states of the region, including Israel, the decision of the Palestine National Council to accept Security Council Resolution 242 as a basis for peace negotiations, and the mutual recognition announced by Israel and the PLO.

Status of Jerusalem

Canada believes that the status of Jerusalem can be resolved only as part of a general settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute and opposes Israel's unilateral annexation of East Jerusalem.

Progress Through Diplomatic Support and Practical Contributions

Canada is a strong advocate of moderation and diplomatic support for those who take risks for peace. Canada has emphasized the importance of practical contributions such as participation in peacekeeping forces, support for human rights and the establishment of development assistance programs in the region.

United Nations Resolutions

Canada opposes all attempts to prejudge the outcome of negotiations by one-sided resolutions in international fora. Successive Canadian governments have been concerned that the polemical nature of many resolutions diverts UN agencies from pursuing their mandates. Canada has strongly opposed any move to suspend or expel Israel from the United Nations or its Specialized Agencies. However when UN resolutions, such as the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention to the Occupied Territories, have identified Israeli actions as unjust, Canada has supported them along with virtually all of its Western allies.

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