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BACKGROUNDERS

**DOCUMENTATION
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POST-HOSTILITIES

ACTIVITIES

BACKGROUNDERS

- 43.259-840
1. ***PROPOSAL FOR A WORLD SUMMIT ON THE INSTRUMENTS OF WAR AND WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION.***
 2. ***CANADIAN EXPERIENCE IN PEACEKEEPING.***
 3. ***POST-HOSTILITIES ASSISTANCE AND RECONSTRUCTION.***
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Min. des Affaires extérieures

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***PROPOSAL FOR A
WORLD SUMMIT ON THE
INSTRUMENTS OF WAR AND WEAPONS
OF MASS DESTRUCTION***

FEBRUARY 8, 1991

**WORLD SUMMIT
ON THE
INSTRUMENTS OF WAR
AND
WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION**

HIGHLIGHTS

- CANADA HAS LONG BEEN A LEADING PROPONENT OF MEASURES TO DEAL EFFECTIVELY WITH THE PROLIFERATION OF WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION, AND HAS ADVOCATED RESTRAINT AND EFFECTIVE CONTROLS ON THE EXPORT OF CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS.
- THE CURRENT GULF CRISIS, WITH ITS USE OF MISSILE TECHNOLOGY AND THREATENED USE OF CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS, HIGHLIGHTS THESE CONCERNS; WE MUST SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS THEM POSITIVELY AND EFFECTIVELY.
- CANADA PROPOSES A GATHERING OF WORLD LEADERS UNDER UNITED NATIONS AUSPICES TO ISSUE A STATEMENT OF GLOBAL, POLITICAL WILL, CONDEMNING THE PROLIFERATION OF WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION AND THEIR DELIVERY SYSTEMS, AS WELL AS MASSIVE BUILD-UPS OF CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS; AND, ENDORSING A COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMME OF ACTION TO ADDRESS THESE CONCERNS.
- UNDER THIS PROGRAMME OF ACTION, INDIVIDUAL PROLIFERATION CONCERNS WILL BE ADDRESSED IN THOSE MULTILATERAL FORUMS SET UP TO DEAL WITH THEM.
- INDIVIDUAL PROGRAMMES OF ACTION ON PROLIFERATION ISSUES WILL BE CARRIED OUT SO THAT BY 1995, A SUBSEQUENT CONFERENCE MIGHT CELEBRATE COMPLETION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE NETWORK OF SPECIFIC NON-PROLIFERATION REGIMES.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS

BASIC FACTS

- THERE ARE NOW FIVE NUCLEAR WEAPON STATES; ONE ADDITIONAL STATE - INDIA - HAS DETONATED A NUCLEAR DEVICE; A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF STATES ARE SUSPECTED OF HAVING OR OF DEVELOPING NUCLEAR WEAPONS.
- THE INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION REGIME IS BUILT AROUND THE TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS (NPT), RATIFIED BY CANADA IN 1970. THE NPT SEEKS TO PREVENT THE PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS TO NON-NUCLEAR-WEAPON STATES, WHILE FACILITATING ACCESS TO NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES, AND COMMITS PARTIES TO PURSUE NEGOTIATIONS TOWARD ENDING THE NUCLEAR ARMS RACE AND ACHIEVING NUCLEAR AND GENERAL DISARMAMENT.

CURRENT CONCERNS

- DESPITE PROGRESS ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS ISSUES (IMPLEMENTATION OF INF; START; PROSPECTS FOR NEGOTIATIONS ON SHORT-RANGE NUCLEAR FORCES) SOME PARTIES TO THE NPT ARGUE THAT THERE HAS BEEN INSUFFICIENT PROGRESS BY THE NUCLEAR WEAPON STATES RELATING TO NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT.
- AT THE 1995 NPT REVIEW CONFERENCE, A DECISION MUST BE TAKEN CONCERNING THE EXTENSION OF THE TREATY. THERE IS A RISK THAT SOME PARTIES MIGHT LINK THE EXTENSION OF THIS IMPORTANT MULTILATERAL ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENT TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF OTHER SPECIFIC ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT OBJECTIVES, WHICH COULD UNDERMINE THE FUTURE VIABILITY OF THE TREATY.
- EVEN WITH THE NPT IN EXISTENCE, THERE REMAINS A DANGER THAT NON-PARTIES, OR EVEN SOME SIGNATORIES, MIGHT SEEK TO OBTAIN THE TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT NECESSARY TO CONSTRUCT NUCLEAR WEAPONS. ALTHOUGH THE NPT HAS OVER 140 ADHERENTS, TWO NUCLEAR WEAPON STATES AND SEVERAL NON-NUCLEAR WEAPON STATES WITH IMPORTANT NUCLEAR PROGRAMS HAVE NOT YET ACCEDED.

PROGRAMME OF ACTION

- WE WILL STRONGLY ADVOCATE AN EARLY COMMITMENT BY SIGNATORIES TO THE NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY TO ITS INDEFINITE EXTENSION IN 1995 AND ENCOURAGE ADHERENCE TO THE TREATY BY ALL NON-PARTIES.
- WE WILL ADVOCATE A FORMAL RE-AFFIRMATION, BY NUCLEAR WEAPON STATES, OF THEIR COMMITMENT TO PURSUE FURTHER NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT MEASURES (START/NUCLEAR TEST BAN) PURSUANT TO ARTICLE VI OF THE NPT.
- WE WILL SUPPORT THE STRENGTHENING OF EFFECTIVE MULTILATERAL CONTROLS ON DUAL-USE NUCLEAR GOODS.

MISSILE SYSTEMS

BASIC FACTS

- IN 1987, CANADA, ALONG WITH SIX OTHER COUNTRIES, ANNOUNCED A COORDINATED POLICY TO CONTROL EXPORTS THAT COULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE ACQUISITION OF NUCLEAR-CAPABLE MISSILES BY OTHER COUNTRIES. THIS BECAME THE MISSILE TECHNOLOGY CONTROL REGIME (MTCR). AGREED UPON WAS A COMMON LIST OF ITEMS TO BE CONTROLLED AND COMMON GUIDELINES FOR DOING SO, THROUGH NATIONAL EXPORT CONTROL PROCEDURES.
- CANADA HOSTED THE MOST RECENT GENERAL MEETING OF MTCR PARTNERS IN JULY 1990, TO EXAMINE WAYS TO ENHANCE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REGIME.
- IN 1990 AND 1991, PARTICIPATION IN THE MTCR HAS EXPANDED; THERE ARE NOW 15 PARTNERS IN THE REGIME.

CURRENT CONCERNS

- AN INCREASING NUMBER OF COUNTRIES ARE ACQUIRING MEDIUM AND LONG-RANGE BALLISTIC MISSILE CAPABILITIES, MAINLY THROUGH THE PURCHASE OF EQUIPMENT AND/OR TECHNOLOGY FROM OTHERS.
- THE SCUD MISSILE USED BY IRAQ IN THE CURRENT GULF CRISIS IS ONE SUCH MISSILE.
- THE CURRENT FOCUS OF THE MTCR GUIDELINES (A MISSILE SYSTEM CAPABLE OF DELIVERING A 500KG PAYLOAD ACROSS A RANGE OF 300KM) MAY BE TOO RESTRICTIVE.

PROGRAMME OF ACTION

- WE WILL PRESS FOR A GLOBAL CONSENSUS ON THE NEED TO END THE PROLIFERATION OF MISSILE SYSTEMS CAPABLE OF DELIVERING WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION.
- WE WILL: ENCOURAGE EXPANDED PARTICIPATION IN THE MISSILE TECHNOLOGY CONTROL REGIME (MTCR), TO INCLUDE THE USSR AND OTHER EXPORTERS OF SUCH TECHNOLOGY; AND, PROPOSE REVISED PARAMETERS FOR THE REGIME TO CAPTURE MISSILES WITH SMALLER PAYLOADS AND LONGER RANGES, WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING THE NEED TO PERMIT THE LEGITIMATE EXCHANGE OF MISSILE TECHNOLOGY FOR PEACEFUL SPACE-RELATED PURPOSES.

BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS

BASIC FACTS

- THERE HAVE BEEN RECURRENT EFFORTS TO APPLY ARMS CONTROL MEASURES TO BIOLOGICAL/TOXIN WEAPONS. THE 1925 GENEVA PROTOCOL BANS THE USE IN WARFARE OF BIOLOGICAL/TOXIC WEAPONS.
- IN 1975, THE BIOLOGICAL AND TOXIN WEAPONS CONVENTION (BTWC) ENTERED INTO FORCE BANNING PRODUCTION, DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF BIOLOGICAL AND TOXIN WEAPONS; THERE ARE CURRENTLY OVER 140 PARTIES TO THE BTWC, BUT SEVERAL KEY COUNTRIES (E.G., IRAQ) HAVE NOT YET ADHERED OR RATIFIED IT.

CURRENT CONCERNS

- PROGRESS IN GENETIC ENGINEERING AND IN THE OTHER FIELDS OF BIOSCIENCE HAS FACILITATED THE DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS.
- A WEAKNESS OF THE BTWC IS THE LACK OF MEANINGFUL VERIFICATION PROVISIONS TO ADDRESS DOUBTS ABOUT COMPLIANCE.
- NOT ALL RELEVANT COUNTRIES ARE PARTY TO THE BTWC.

PROGRAMME OF ACTION

- WE WILL SEEK TO STRENGTHEN THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE BIOLOGICAL AND TOXIN WEAPONS CONVENTION BY DEVELOPING FURTHER ITS CONFIDENCE-BUILDING AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROVISIONS AT THE REVIEW CONFERENCE THIS SEPTEMBER (IMPROVING EXCHANGES OF INFORMATION; WIDENING THE SCOPE OF THE EXCHANGE OF DATA). AS WELL, WE WILL SEEK THE AGREEMENT OF SIGNATORIES TO CONVENE A SPECIALLY MANDATED CONFERENCE, IN 1993, TO NEGOTIATE VERIFICATION PROVISIONS FOR THE CONVENTION.

CHEMICAL WEAPONS

BASIC FACTS

- CANADA IS A PARTY TO THE 1925 GENEVA PROTOCOL FOR THE PROHIBITION OF THE USE IN WAR OF ASPHYXIATING, POISONOUS OR OTHER GASES, AND OF BACTERIOLOGICAL METHODS OF WARFARE.
- NEGOTIATIONS HAVE BEEN UNDERWAY SINCE 1984, AT THE GENEVA CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT (CD) ON REACHING A GLOBAL, COMPREHENSIVE AND EFFECTIVELY VERIFIABLE CHEMICAL WEAPONS (CW) CONVENTION.
- IN 1985, AUSTRALIA ORGANIZED A FIRST MEETING OF COUNTRIES TO EXCHANGE INFORMATION ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF NATIONAL MEASURES TAKEN TO CURB CW PROLIFERATION AND, TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE, TO HARMONIZE THESE MEASURES.
- IN 1990, THE USA AND THE USSR SIGNED A BILATERAL AGREEMENT WHICH WILL REDUCE THEIR RESPECTIVE CW STOCKS TO A COMMON, LOW LEVEL OVER A 10-YEAR PERIOD.

CURRENT CONCERNS

- AS A RESULT OF THE GULF CRISIS, CONCERN HAS INCREASED OVER THE PROLIFERATION OF CW, INCLUDING THE POTENTIAL FOR ITS USE AGAINST CIVILIAN POPULATIONS.

PROGRAMME OF ACTION

- A COMMITMENT WILL BE SOUGHT FROM ALL CD MEMBER STATES TO CONCLUDE, BY THE END OF 1992, THE NEGOTIATION OF A GLOBAL AND COMPREHENSIVE CW CONVENTION, AT THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT IN GENEVA.
- WE WILL ADVOCATE AN EXPANSION OF THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE AUSTRALIA GROUP, AND ENHANCED NATIONAL ENFORCEMENT OF THE APPROACHES OF THE GROUP IN CONTROLLING THE EXPORT OF CHEMICALS WHICH COULD BE USED IN THE PRODUCTION OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS.

CONVENTIONAL ARMS

BASIC FACTS

- VIRTUALLY ALL COUNTRIES EXERCISE SOME SORT OF CONTROL OVER THEIR ARMS EXPORTS. CANADA IS ONE OF THE MORE "RESTRICTIVE" SUPPLIERS, WHICH EXERCISES CAREFUL UNILATERAL CONTROL OVER ITS ARMS EXPORTS;
- HOWEVER, THERE ARE NO GLOBAL, COMPREHENSIVE OR LEGALLY BINDING INTERNATIONAL MEASURES TO CONTROL ARMS TRANSFERS.
- RESOLUTIONS AIMED AT PROMOTING TRANSPARENCY OR THE REGULATION OF ARMS TRANSFERS HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED IN THE UNITED NATIONS SINCE 1965. A RESOLUTION COSPONSORED BY CANADA IN 1988 RESULTED IN THE FORMATION OF AN EXPERTS STUDY ON THIS QUESTION, WHICH WILL SUBMIT ITS CONCLUSIONS TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THIS FALL.
- CANADA HAS UNILATERALLY AGREED TO MAKE AVAILABLE STATISTICS ON THE EXPORT OF ARMS, BEGINNING WITH THE 1990 CALENDAR YEAR, IN AN EFFORT TO INCREASE TRANSPARENCY IN THE ARMS TRADE.

CURRENT CONCERNS

- THE 1970S AND EARLY 1980S SAW A LARGE INCREASE IN THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN CONVENTIONAL ARMS. ARMS EXPORTS TO THIRD WORLD DESTINATIONS ARE ESTIMATED TO HAVE HAD A VALUE AS HIGH AS US\$60 BILLION IN 1983, WITH OVER 40% OF THE WEAPONS INVOLVED GOING TO THE MIDDLE EAST.
- A HIGH LEVEL OF ARMS ACQUISITIONS IS A FACTOR IN ESCALATING CONFLICTS. THE SPREAD OF SOPHISTICATED CONVENTIONAL WEAPONRY INCREASES THE PROBABLE LEVEL OF DEVASTATION SHOULD WAR OCCUR.

PROGRAMME OF ACTION

- WE WILL URGE A MEETING OF THE MAJOR ARMS EXPORTERS TO ENCOURAGE A FORMAL COMMITMENT TO GREATER SENSITIVITY IN THE EXPORT OF CONVENTIONAL ARMS (I.E., GREATER TRANSPARENCY; CONSTRAINT; CONSULTATIONS IN SITUATIONS WHERE UNUSUAL BUILD-UPS SEEMS TO BE DEVELOPING).
- WE WILL ADVOCATE EARLY ACTION ON AN INFORMATION EXCHANGE SYSTEM REGARDING ARMS TRANSFERS, INCLUDING SERIOUS EXAMINATION BY ALL STATES OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS EXPERTS GROUP NOW STUDYING THE QUESTION OF TRANSPARENCY IN ARMS TRANSFERS.
- WE WILL PROPOSE A COMMITMENT BY THE 22 SIGNATORIES OF THE CFE TREATY TO ENSURE THAT ARMS AFFECTED BY THE ACCORD ARE NOT EXPORTED TO REGIONS OF TENSION.

CANADIAN EXPERIENCE IN PEACEKEEPING

FEBRUARY 8, 1991

When hostilities end in the Gulf, there will be a number of requirements that could call for a United Nations peacekeeping role. These requirements could include the disengagement of forces, maintenance of public order, as well more traditional types of peacekeeping activities such as the observation of ceasefire lines or international borders.

Canada has considerable experience in UN peacekeeping operations of various sorts and in many regions of the world. The Canadian Government has made it known to the Secretary General of the United Nations and to others its willingness to make this expertise available in the planning for an eventual operation and to consider contribution to a mission, if requested.

There are, of course, unique elements in every conflict and the current crisis in the Gulf is no exception. It is not, therefore, possible to predict the type of operation that might be required or to speculate on the type of contribution that Canada might be asked to make. The situation surrounding the cessation of hostilities will determine the nature of the operation.

Canadians have participated in all but one of the 19 United Nations peacekeeping operations over the past 40 years as well as in missions not under the authority of the UN, such as in South East Asia and in the Multinational Force in the Sinai. Canadian involvement has therefore been broad, both in geographic terms in the nature of the operations.

Following are examples of peacekeeping operations to which Canada has contributed and continues in some cases to contribute, in the Middle East:

UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO)

Established in 1948 and employed continuously since in the supervision of the various truce and peacekeeping arrangements between Israel and her four Arab neighbouring states. Canada has contributed military observers to the mission since 1954 and provided the senior officer to the mission from 1954 to 1956 - Lieutenant General E.L.M. Burns who went on to a distinguished career at United Nations Headquarters.

First UN Emergency Force (UNEF 1)

Canada played a leading role as a peacemaker in bringing the Suez war to an end in 1956 and thereby allowing Israel and Egypt to stop fighting and the Anglo/French alliance to withdraw from the region. The key to achieving a cessation to hostilities was the establishment of the UNEF, the concept which won Lester B. Pearson the Nobel Prize for peace. Canada was a

major contributor to the force in the fields of medical, communications, engineering as well as logistics support. Canada's contribution in the establishment of this new concept in conflict resolution was reflected in General Burns being appointed as the first Commander of the Force.

Second UN Emergency Force (UNEF 2)

Established in 1973 to bring the October Egypt/Israel war to an end in the Sinai and allow for a ceasefire, disengagement and separation of forces. Canada was a major contributor to this mission over the six years of its existence leading to the Camp David Accords and the signing of a peace treaty. The mission is an example of the role peacekeepers can play in humanitarian activities such as prisoner exchanges and refugee relief in cooperation with international agencies.

UN Disengagement Observe Force (UNDOF)

Established in 1973 to supervise the ceasefire, disengagement and the maintenance of a buffer zone between Israeli and Syrian forces on the Golan Heights. Canada has contributed signals, and logistics units to the force since its inception.

UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)

Established in 1978 to confirm the withdrawal of Israeli forces from southern Lebanon and to assist the Government of Lebanon to re-establish its authority in the area. Canada played an important role, as it has in the establishment of other missions, by the early contribution of a communications unit until more permanent communications facilities could be provided by the UN.

UN Iran/Iraq Military Observer Group (UNIIMOG)

Established in 1987 to verify and supervise the ceasefire and withdrawal and separation of Iranian and Iraqi forces along the border following the eight year war. Again, Canada played an important role in the initial formation of the mission by contributing communications support and has contributed observers to it ever since.

The Multinational Force of Observers (MFO) Sinai

The MFO was established outside of the UN through the Camp David Accords process to supervise the implementation of the peace treaty signed between Israel and Egypt in 1979. Canada has contributed a helicopter unit to the Force and continues to provide military observers.

***POST-HOSTILITIES ASSISTANCE
AND RECONSTRUCTION***

FEBRUARY 8, 1991

POST-HOSTILITIES ASSISTANCE AND RECONSTRUCTION

Victims of the Conflict

Canada's first priority will be the needs of the victims of the conflict. Canada has been among the first to respond not just with commitments, but with cash disbursements to the humanitarian needs arising from the Gulf crisis and the war. From the \$77.5 million package of humanitarian and economic assistance Canada has committed to those affected by the Gulf crisis, to date Canada has provided a total of some \$16 million to Canadian and international organizations for humanitarian assistance since the crisis began, \$5 million of this since the war began.

The UN agencies, coordinated by the UN Disaster Relief Organization, and the International Committee of the Red Cross have already positioned themselves within the region to address humanitarian needs, and are ready to move into Iraq and Kuwait as soon as they are able.

Canada stands ready to provide further support as soon as it is needed to both international organizations and Canadian non-governmental organizations offering effective assistance in the region, including shelter, food, medicine, medical care and relative location services. Canada will also provide food aid as required.

Infrastructure Damage

Countries which have sustained damage to their infrastructure will need project and investment financing, technical assistance and goods and services. Wealthy countries of the region, such as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait itself, are likely to take a leading role in any reconstruction effort through such organizations as the Gulf Cooperation Council.

Assistance from outside the region may well be required. The concern will be to ensure that adequate financial, technical and material resources are available to all the countries requiring assistance, particularly the poorer countries of the region which may be affected. Options include using existing regional or international institutions, as well as creating new institutions to channel and coordinate assistance. Assistance may also be provided by donors on a bilateral basis either as grants or as loans.

Canada will be active in supporting multilateral efforts to coordinate necessary assistance to the region, and will explore what bilateral development assistance might be appropriate.

Front Line States

The Front Line States may need continued economic support in the post war period in order to re-ignite development and growth in their countries. To date, concern has focused on Egypt, Jordan and Turkey, but the range of countries thus affected may expand as the war is prolonged. While donor countries have marshalled some \$14 billion dollars for these countries in 1990 and 1991, the full impact of the war has yet to be measured and an assessment of their new economic needs developed.

Canada has committed over \$57 million from the \$77.5 million package of assistance to these three countries, in addition to development assistance programming already in place. Canada will examine what further assistance may be appropriate a consequence of the war. The priority for Canadian development assistance will continue to be the poorest people and countries.

Oil Importing Developing Countries

The situation in the Gulf is also affecting countries much further afield which have had to re-integrate workers who fled Iraq and Kuwait, and which have also had to adapt to fluctuations in oil prices. The recent drop in oil prices is welcome relief to many oil importing developing countries, but the final impact will depend on whether prices again rise.

Canada is monitoring closely the impact on many oil importing developing countries. Already, measures are in place in the World Bank and International Monetary Fund to ensure that countries have access to necessary financing under more flexible conditions. The regional development banks are also examining their programming to enable them to respond to essential needs. Canada will review its bilateral development assistance programs as appropriate to meet new priorities of affected countries.

***THE CANADIAN RESPONSE TO THE
GULF OIL SPILL***

FEBRUARY 8, 1991

The Canadian Response to the Gulf Oil Spill

Further to today's press release announcing measures being taken the Government of Canada in response to the Gulf oil spill, Canada is actively pursuing the feasibility of establishing permanent mechanisms to deal with man-made, international environmental disasters. Two areas for action have been identified:

A) Establish Rapid Emergency Response Mechanisms

- All governments should have rapid access to information from designated experts and responsibility centres for coping with environmental disasters. Such a mechanism does not exist. However, Canada has been discussing with foreign and UN officials an idea for a global computer-based network that would fulfill this need. The reaction to this proposal has been positive.
- Once the required action has been identified, there is a need for coordination of the disaster relief operation. Existing agencies such as the United Nations Disaster Relief Organization (UNDRO) and the Red Cross are experienced in dealing with disasters that threaten human life. However, they have either not been sufficiently funded or mandated to cope with disasters to the environment. Canada is assessing the cooperation between the UN Environment Program, the International Maritime Organization and other agencies on the current crisis and will be making specific proposals to the United Nations regarding future coordination of international emergency responses.

B) International Legal Action

- Canada favours an international legal effort to make it clear that Saddam Hussein's action in deliberately causing an oil spill in the Gulf is illegal and unacceptable to the international community of nations.
- The proposal being made by Canada at this time is that a group of high-level legal experts from a number of interested countries meet to review the existing body of international law that might apply to intentional damage to the natural environment, and to examine ways to improve its effectiveness. Canada would be happy to host such a meeting.
- Under customary international law, a state is liable for damage caused to other states and their environment by activities under its jurisdiction or control. This concept is embodied in Principle 21 of the 1972 Stockholm Declaration on the protection of the environment, and is also to be found in the 1982 United Nations Law of the Sea Convention.

- Iraq has also violated the object and purpose of the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques, which it has signed. That Convention prohibits altering the composition of a body of water for military purposes in a way that has severe, long-term and widespread effects. As well, the 1977 Protocols to the 1949 Geneva Conventions on the Law of Armed Conflict, although not in force for Iraq, prohibit states from using methods of warfare that are intended to cause damage to the natural environment.

- The basic principle embodied in all these conventions is that the deliberate depredation of the environment for military purposes is prohibited by international law. While this principle exists as a rule of customary international law, the purpose of an international legal effort would be to make clear that the principle is binding on all states, and to strengthen its application.

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