



Statements and Speeches

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THE QUESTION OF CYPRUS

A Statement made in the Plenary Meeting of the Thirtieth Session of the United Nations General Assembly by Dr. Saul F. Rae, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations, on November 13, 1975.

More than 15 months have now passed since the disruptive conflict in Cyprus of July 1974. Canada, with most other members of the international community, is deeply concerned about the lack of progress during the ensuing period towards the achievement of a just and lasting settlement of the problems of Cyprus.

Canada's interest in Cyprus has various facets. Before and since the critical days in July 1974, we have consistently stated our support of the principle of the preservation of the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus. This continues to be our position to-day. The fact that Cyprus is a member of the Commonwealth adds to our concern about its political future and the welfare of its people.

We are also concerned about Cyprus because of our role as a major troop contributor to the United Nations Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), established in March 1964 pursuant to the adoption of Resolution 186 by the Security Council. For more than 11 years, Canadian peacekeepers have worked with those from other countries in an effort to prevent hostilities and to create a situation in which arrangements could be worked out that would enable the two communities to live together in peace and harmony. The fact that, through those 11 years, over 17,000 men of Canada's armed forces have, in succession, served in UNFICYP is a demonstration of the measure of Canada's commitment to the cause of peace on the island.

Canada continues to support the original and current objectives of UNFICYP, and is prepared to give substance to this support through its contribution to the peacekeeping efforts of the United Nations. In doing this, however, we feel we have earned a right to look to the parties immediately concerned for some progress towards a solution that would eventually make possible a conclusion of this particular peacekeeping operation. In this connection, I should like to remind this Assembly of the statement made at this session of the General Assembly by the Secretary of State for External Affairs of Canada, the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen. In his address in the general debate on September 22, he made, *inter alia*, the

following points (and I quote):

"Peace-keeping is one of the few useful instruments that the international community has developed to help promote peaceful solutions to disputes.... But all too often peace-keeping reduces the incentives of the disputants to move beyond the mere cessation of hostilities to a serious search for a political settlement. Consequently, sceptics charge that United Nations peace-keeping does little more than perpetuate an uneasy status quo. If peace-keeping is to be truly effective it must be accompanied by a parallel effort on the political level, especially by the parties most directly concerned, to convert the temporary peace that a peacekeeping force is asked to maintain into something more durable."

One of our principal interests in Cyprus relates to the well-being of the people of the island, and more particularly to the humanitarian problems that resulted from the conflict of July 1974. The contribution that UNFICYP has been able to make on a daily basis to the alleviation of these problems is substantial and we are gratified that, through our participation in UNFICYP, we have been able to contribute to this important work. In addition, Canada has joined many other members of the international community in contributing to the equally-important work in Cyprus of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Committee of the Red Cross. For our part, the Canadian Government, pursuant to the General Assembly's Resolution 3212, has already provided relief assistance in the amount of \$375,000 to the two major international relief organizations operating in Cyprus. Much has already been accomplished in this humanitarian field by UNFICYP, the UNHCR and the ICRC, but much still remains to be done. Their combined efforts are deserving of the collective and continuing financial support of the world community.

Finally, as Canadians, we are concerned about Cyprus because of the disruptive effect that problems there have on the relations between various of our close friends, as well as on the prospects for peace and security in the whole Eastern Mediterranean area. In the demographic mosaic of Canada, we have many citizens of Greek, Turkish and Cypriot origin, all of whom are concerned about developments in the Republic of Cyprus. But I should like to emphasize that their concern is shared by all Canadians of whatever origin and by the Government of Canada as well.

Against this background, it seems only appropriate for Canada to

join with other members of the United Nations in urging that renewed efforts be made to find a solution to the problems of Cyprus. After 15 months, we remain convinced that progress towards this objective is most likely to be achieved through substantive and meaningful negotiations, conducted in a dedicated and flexible manner, between representatives of the island's two communities. It is from there that the initiative must come, with other interested parties contributing as best they can to the development and maintenance of the necessary momentum. In our view, the circumstances at the present time are as propitious as they are likely to be for successful negotiations -- and we urge that this opportunity be grasped. In this regard, we are particularly appreciative of the personal efforts the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and his personal representatives in the area, have been making to facilitate the negotiating process. We know that the Secretary-General will not be discouraged by the rather unproductive results of the fourth round of negotiations held here in New York in September and will persist in his efforts, on the basis of the co-operation of the parties, to schedule a fifth -- and, one hopes, more fruitful -- meeting in this continuing series of intercommunal discussions.

One year ago, Canada joined the members of the United Nations in unanimously supporting Resolution 3212, which, because of its balance, appeared to provide a reasonable context in which the intercommunal negotiations could proceed. All of us will be required shortly to vote on another General Assembly resolution on Cyprus. In this resolution, it will be necessary to take account of a variety of important considerations but, from the point of view of my delegation, the overriding concern is that whatever resolution should materialize should be couched in terms that will permit it to receive the same broadly-based support as Resolution 3212 received last year.

The delegation of Canada, representing a country that has been a major troop-contributor to UNFICYP, would naturally like to see some reiteration of the thought contained in operative Paragraph 8 of Resolution 3212, which called upon all parties to continue to co-operate fully with the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus. In this connection, and with reference to a directly-related matter, I should like to recall once more a very important paragraph from my Minister's statement in the general debate, to which I have referred (and I quote):

"Peacekeeping can only continue...if it has the full support of all member states, including practical support in the form of prompt payment of peacekeeping assessments. Without the necessary financial resources,

neither the United Nations nor individual force contributors can be expected for long to carry the responsibilities they have been asked to assume."

If we can achieve this year the adoption of another resolution that has support at least as wide as that of last year's 3212, our collective comment on the situation in Cyprus, as expressed through that resolution, can make a positive contribution to the inter-communal negotiations we all hope and expect will be resumed shortly. The problem we face collectively is to find a means, each in his own way, of contributing to the solution of this long-standing problem. Some have a direct and immediate role to play and their responsibility is proportionately greater, but I think we all share this week a common responsibility to ensure that the debate on Cyprus in this, the thirtieth anniversary session of the United Nations, is carried out in the manner most likely to contribute to the objective we are all seeking.

S/C