

STATEMENT DISCOURS

SECRETARY
OF STATE
FOR EXTERNAL
AFFAIRS.

SECRÉTAIRE
D'ÉTAT AUX
AFFAIRES
EXTÉRIEURES.



STATEMENTS BY THE SECRETARY OF
STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
THE HONOURABLE MITCHELL SHARP ON
OCTOBER 6 AND OCTOBER 8, 1973

SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

STATEMENT OF OCTOBER 6, 1973

I was distressed to learn that hostilities had broken out once again in the Middle East. Reports indicate clearly that the present fighting is the severest since the 1967 war. I would urge the parties to agree to an immediate cease-fire and I would hope that they will agree to submit their differences for resolution to the United Nations.

This renewal of the conflict is to be deplored and tragically underscores the need for the parties to the dispute to reach a settlement within the framework of Resolution 242, in order that a durable and lasting peace will prevail and the security of all countries and peoples of the region will be ensured.

To date, the present hostilities seem confined to the areas adjacent to the 1967 cease-fire lines - in the Golan Heights and in the Suez Canal area - and we have had no reports of any Canadian civilians being in any imminent danger. There are 20 Canadian military observers in the area serving with the U.N. Truce Supervisory Organization.

We are continuing to watch the situation closely.

STATEMENT OF OCTOBER 8, 1973

From United Nations' observers reports now being published in New York, the indications are that on this occasion initial attacks across the cease-fire line came from the Egyptian and Syrian sides. But what is important now is not who started the present round of fighting, but to get it stopped. We are urging both parties to restore the cease-fire as soon as possible. There is grave danger that continued fighting, with both sides trying to gain some military advantage before accepting a new cease-fire, will make it more difficult to start the process of peaceful negotiation. Every outbreak of fighting brings more casualties, more destruction, more bitterness for the people of the Arab countries and Israel. Surely the lesson of events in recent years in the Middle East is that in the absence of a negotiated settlement, one war only leads to another.

We are in touch with the Secretary General of the United Nations and will do everything we can to strengthen his hand. The U.N. has machinery that can be used to restore the cease-fire and we are appealing to everyone concerned to make use of it. We are making this appeal to Israel and the Arab countries as well as to the great powers. The Prime Minister will take advantage of his meeting with Chinese leaders to discuss this grave outbreak of violence in the Middle East. We hope the Chinese will use their influence in favour of a cease-fire followed by negotiations on a peaceful settlement. I have asked our Ambassadors in Washington and Moscow, as well as in other capitals, to put our point of view to these governments.

Our Embassies are being kept open on a 24 hour basis and Canadians in the region are being advised to keep in close touch with our representatives.

Reports from our missions indicate that no Canadians are in any imminent danger, although naturally we are keeping a close watch on the situation.

We have a report from our representatives in the area that the Canadians serving with UNTSO (United Nations Truce Supervision Organization) are all unharmed and accounted for. I might also add that during the course of a meeting yesterday with our Permanent Rep. to the U.N., Secretary General Waldheim indicated that Canadian UNTSO observers "are doing an excellent job under extremely difficult conditions".