



## STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION  
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
OTTAWA - CANADA

56/32

### THE MIDDLE EAST

Statements on the Middle East situation by Mr. L.B. Pearson, Secretary of State for External Affairs, during the Special Emergency Session of the United Nations General Assembly, November 7, 1956.

1. In explaining Canada's vote in favour of a resolution proposed by 19 Asian-African delegations which affirmed the Assembly's determination to implement its previous resolutions and called for the immediate withdrawal of foreign forces from Egyptian territory, Mr. Pearson said:

"I merely wish to speak for a minute in order to explain the vote of my Delegation on Draft Resolution A/3309. In this connection, my Delegation supports the view which has been expressed by the representative of Peru and others as to the interconnection between the two resolutions which are before us--the close relationship between the two of them--and the impossibility of separating one in its implementation from the other. In that sense we give an interpretation to the word "immediately" which has been given by others as meaning as quickly as possible. In our minds, there is a relationship bearing on this word 'immediately' between the withdrawal of the forces referred to in the Resolution and the arrival and the functioning of the United Nations force".

2. The Assembly also considered a second report by the Secretary-General on the plan for the international United Nations force. Expressing its approval of Mr. Hammarskjold's recommendations in this report, the Assembly established an Advisory Committee composed of representatives of Brazil, Canada, Colombia, India, Iran, Norway and Pakistan, with the Secretary-General as Chairman, to "undertake the development of those aspects of the planning for the force and which are not within the area of responsibility of the Chief of Command." The relevant resolution which had been

sponsored by Argentina, Burma, Ceylon, Denmark, Ecuador, Ethiopia and Sweden, was adopted by a vote of 64 in favour, none against, and 12 abstentions. Following is the text of a statement made by Mr. Pearson prior to the vote:

"I wish to give the full support of our Delegation and the Canadian Government to this resolution setting up the United Nations emergency force, and to endorse the report of the Secretary-General, which is related to it. I would like also to echo the appreciation and gratitude expressed by the Danish Delegate to the Secretary-General for his tireless energy and skill, without which we would not have this resolution before us.

"My Government has been proud to offer a contribution to this force and steps are now being taken by us to organize it as a matter of urgency.\* With the acceptance of this resolution--and surely it can be unanimously approved--the ending of hostilities can be confirmed and safeguarded and work of peace making begun on a solid United Nations foundation. Indeed, it has begun, but much remains to be done before it is finished. This is a moment for sober satisfaction, but certainly not for premature rejoicing. Yet it is hard not to rejoice at the thought that we may have been saved from the very edge of catastrophe--and saved, let us not forget, not by threats or blusters, but by the action of the United Nations. If we draw the necessary conclusions from the manner of our escape and act on them, perhaps we will not in the future have to get so perilously close again. I repeat, however, that much remains to be done, even in the first stage which is now underway. The organization of a United Nations force from other than permanent members of the Security Council, is bound to be a task of great complexity and difficulty. We are breaking new ground, we are pioneering for peace, but if we take full advantage of this opportunity, I feel sure we can reap a rich harvest from that ground in terms of peace and security in the area concerned and, indeed, in wider terms as well.

"We must now press on with the greater and perhaps even more difficult task of a political settlement: which will be honourable and just, and provide hope for security and progress for millions in this part of the world who have not known them in these troublous and distracting years. This is implicit

\* On November 7, Prime Minister St. Laurent announced in Ottawa that the Canadian Government had agreed to offer a Canadian contingent of battalion strength to the international United Nations force for the Middle East.

in the resolution before us and that of November 3, A 3276, which establish the conditions within which the United Nations force must operate. Until we have succeeded in this task of a political settlement, our work today, and the cease-fire of yesterday-- though they give us reason for hope and encouragement--- remain uncompleted.

"Nevertheless, the fighting has ceased, the process of restoration is to follow, and the work of peaceful settlement pursued in one part of this distracted and dangerous world. We cannot fail to be relieved and pleased about this, and to rejoice in the fact that the United Nations has made the essential contribution to such a good result.

"If we had not acted swiftly and, I think, effectively here, we might have been facing today a conflict which perhaps would have engulfed us all.

"I hope that we can pass this resolution quickly so that the United Nations force can be organized promptly and effectively and moved to the spot without delay.

"Surely that is the most urgent and immediate duty for us to discharge at this moment, and I hope that we can do it without delay."

---