

Remarks given by H.E. Mr. Paul Heinbecker
to the United Nations Security Council
on the violence in Israël, Gaza and the West Bank
October 3, 2000

Monsieur le Président,

Le Canada est très préoccupé par la violence qui a eu lieu au cours des derniers jours en Israël, en Cisjordanie et à Gaza.

Nous faisons appel aux deux parties de faire tous les efforts nécessaires pour mettre fin immédiatement aux hostilités et de travailler ensemble sur des mesures concrètes visant à empêcher qu'une telle situation se reproduise.

Les dirigeants israéliens et palestiniens doivent faire le nécessaire pour s'assurer qu'à la fois les forces de sécurité et les civils fassent preuve de retenue et pour prévenir toute déclaration ou autre activité apte à rendre la situation plus tendue qu'elle ne l'est déjà.

Inflammatory actions at this critical time in the peace process serve only to disrupt negotiations and provoke violence.

In that context, Mr. Sharon's visit to the Haram al Sharif/Temple Mount on Thursday last, whatever his reasons for making that visit, was not well-considered in the broader context of the peace process and has not proven helpful to it.

Both sides share responsibility for the violence but the disproportionate and excessive use of force and the large number of Palestinian civilian fatalities has been particularly disturbing.

This violence is especially heart-wrenching because it is so unnecessary.

Israeli and Palestinian leaders have demonstrated the ability to understand the needs of the other party and the willingness to work together to achieve a just and honourable peace.

Over the past decade, together, they have achieved through negotiation what many thought impossible.

They must not falter so close to their goal.

This Council must do all it can to support them as they work to resolve their last differences.

Both Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat understand that the needs and aspirations of both Israelis and Palestinians can only be met through negotiations and the peace that negotiations will bring.

Peace, ultimately, is the best means of ensuring the permanent end to violence.

Canada therefore strongly endorses the efforts of the United States and Egypt to bring the parties together.

The Security Council will have ably fulfilled its role if our efforts contribute to the return of the parties to the negotiating table with redoubled determination to resolve their remaining differences.

Finally, we deplore the loss of life on both sides.

Canada extends its sincere condolences to the families of the victims on both sides.

Thank you, Mr. President