

Islamic Republic of Mauritania

Date of Independence:	November 28, 1960
Capital:	Nouakchott
Population:	1,630,000
Head of State and Head of Government:	His Excellency Colonel Maaouya Ould Sid Ahmed Taya
Economy:	Slow growth in GNP. Persistent drought. Very severe austerity. The mainstays of the economy are agriculture, livestock raising and fishing. Few or no exports, except for copper, the prices of which have plummeted.

Canada/Mauritania Relations: Relations between Canada and Mauritania are good, although still in their infancy. Mauritania has received Canadian food aid and, under a bursary program, a number of young Mauritians are trained in Canada. The minimal trade between the two countries is in the area of mining and specific internationally funded projects.

His Excellency Colonel Maaouya Ould Sid Ahmed Taya: Born in 1943, in Atar. In 1960, one of the first officers trained in France for the young army. Assistant to the Chief of Staff in 1976, then Commander of the northern region during the Saharan war. Minister of Defence from 1978 to March 1979, then Minister responsible for the Military Committee. Prime Minister from April 1981 to March 1984. Ousted Lieutenant-Colonel Ould Haidalla on December 12, 1984, and became the new Head of State.