

The Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, Secretary of State for External Affairs, announced that a Framework Agreement for Commercial and Economic Co-operation between Canada and the European Communities was signed today (July 6, 1976) at Ottawa. The Agreement was signed for the Government of Canada by the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen Secretary of State for External Affairs of Canada, and for the European Communities by Mr. Max Van der Stoep, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of The Netherlands, President in Office of the Council, and by Sir Christopher Soames, Vice-President of The Commission of the European Communities.

After the signing of the Agreement, speeches were made by the signatories at a luncheon to mark the occasion. In their speeches the signatories emphasized the importance they attached to the Framework Agreement in the development of a closer and more vigorous relationship between Canada and the European Communities. The Agreement reflects the wish of the Contracting Parties to add a new Community dimension to the cordial and extensive relations which already exist between Canada and each of the Member States of the European Communities. It will provide a framework and focus for Canada/EC (European Communities) economic co-operation which should lead to increased trade and investment opportunities between the two sides. The implementation of the Agreement should in particular facilitate the expansion of industrial co-operation between Canada and Europe.

Among the principal objectives of economic co-operation which are identified in the Agreement, are: the development of Canadian and European industries; the encouragement of technological and scientific progress; the opening up of new sources of supply and markets; the creation of new employment opportunities; the reduction of regional disparities and the protection and improvement of the environment.

Certain features of the Agreement may be singled out:

The Agreement reaffirms the two parties' respect for the principles of the GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) and confirms their wish to accord each other Most-Favoured-Nation Treatment on a reciprocal basis.

The Contracting Parties undertake to promote the development and diversification of their reciprocal trade to the highest possible level by means of commercial co-operation.