

News Release

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DECLARATION BETWEEN CANADA AND THE RIO GROUP

Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet today announced that Canada and the Rio Group have issued a joint declaration establishing high-level political consultations. The declaration is a follow-up to a proposal Mr. Ouellet put forward in September during his meeting in New York with the Rio Group.

"The declaration is a testimony to the growing partnership between Canada and the member countries of the Rio Group," said Mr. Ouellet. "It also points to a stronger future in the hemisphere – one that Canada and the Rio Group can help create through the consultation process formalized in this declaration."

The 14-member Rio Group is the highest political consultative forum for Latin America. "A formal consultation process with the Rio Group is an important policy priority for Canada and comes after years of successful informal discussion and increased ties throughout the region," the Minister added.

Mr. Ouellet also expressed his particular appreciation for the co-ordinating role of Foreign Minister Galo Leoro of Ecuador in reaching an agreement among the Rio Group member countries on the text of the declaration. Ecuador currently holds the rotating presidency of the Rio Group.

The joint declaration – the text of which follows – was issued as a separate press release earlier today in Quito, Ecuador, in association with a meeting of Rio Group foreign ministers.

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