

PRESS RELEASE



COMMUNIQUÉ

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

CANADA

MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES EXTÉRIEURES

No. 34

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY JULY 14, 1967.

EXCHANGE OF NOTES WITH USSR ON CONSULAR MATTERS

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Paul Martin, today announced the signature of an agreement with the USSR covering certain consular questions.

The main purpose of the agreement, concluded by an exchange of notes (see annex) in Moscow between the Canadian Ambassador and the Soviet foreign ministry on July 14th, is to protect citizens of each country visiting the other from the difficulties sometimes created by different citizenship legislation.

It also provides that the area of jurisdiction of a Canadian Consulate when it is eventually opened in the USSR will be of comparable size to the area of jurisdiction of the Soviet Consulate-General in Montreal, which covers the Province of Quebec.

At the same time the Secretary of State for External Affairs reports continuing progress toward the solution of the question of reunification of families separated by the Second World War and its aftermath.

Since 1964 the Prime Minister has been in direct correspondence with Mr. Khrushchev, and subsequently with Mr. Kosygin on this subject. The Secretary of State for External Affairs also raised it with the Soviet Premier in Moscow in November 1966. There have been many other discussions of the question, including those initiated by the Canadian parliamentary delegation on its visit to the USSR in 1965.

The results of efforts on both sides and of the continuing work of the Canadian Red Cross in cooperation with the Soviet Red Cross and Red Crescent have been encouraging. In 1965 and 1966 the number of people able to leave the Soviet Union to join their families in Canada has more than doubled over the two preceding years, to over 400.

In discussions with Canadian representatives the Soviet Union has confirmed its intention to continue to give sympathetic and benevolent consideration to applications from people in the USSR wishing to depart to join their families in Canada. The Secretary of State for External Affairs is therefore hopeful that this matter, once a serious obstacle to improved understanding between Canada and the USSR, will continue to be resolved satisfactorily.