

Canada sends delegates to UN meeting on aging

Canada was one of more than 100 countries that adopted an international plan of action on aging at the United Nations World Assembly on Aging held in Vienna, Austria, July 26 to August 6.

The plan, which will receive final approval by the UN General Assembly this fall, was in accord with the consensus reached by the Canadian delegation and incorporated the essence of many of the recommendations submitted by Canada.

Senator Maurice Riel, who headed the Canadian delegation during the first week, set forth Canada's position. "We acknowledge that primary responsibility for the formulation and implementation of its own policies on aging rests within each country," he said. "An international plan of action will, however, be relevant to our own efforts in furthering the development of policies and planning in respect to the aging."

The Canadian delegation stressed the importance of an integrated approach to health care, the need to offer a wide range of health and social services aimed at giving greater independence to the aged, and the human aspects of dying.

The delegation emphasized the significance of better public education in order to change current stereotypes affecting perceptions of older people.

Other areas upon which Canada focused special attention included the need to give greater concern to the special



The official logo of the World Assembly on Aging is the tropical banyan tree. This logo symbolizing longevity, self-reliance and continuing growth was designed by 80-year-old United States artist Oscar Berger.

requirements of elderly women, particularly in the area of income security; the important role of the voluntary sector, as well as the necessity for more research and training in gerontology.

The Canadian delegation included members of Parliament representing the three federal parties, provincial cabinet ministers, federal government representatives, and members of non-governmental organizations concerned with aging. Charles Turner, member of Parliament for London East, headed the delegation during the second week.

As a follow-up to the World Assembly, Health and Welfare Minister Monique Bégin plans to convene a national conference on aging within a year.

Japanese motor vehicle exports

Canada and Japan have reached an understanding on automotive issues, Minister of International Trade Ed Lumley and Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Regional Economic Expansion Herb Gray have announced.

The Japanese Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) has forecast that passenger car exports to Canada over the period July 1, 1982 to December 31, 1982 will not exceed 63 000 units. This will result in a calendar year export level of 153 000 units, which represents a decrease of 23.5 per cent from 1981 exports.

Before the end of 1982, the Japanese and Canadian sides will meet to discuss the forecast for the succeeding period.

As part of the understanding reached, the two governments are committed to

begin discussions in September 1982, on future co-operation between the Japanese and Canadian automotive industries. Ministers Lumley and Gray said upcoming discussions would be important in leading to increased industrial co-operation in the automotive sector and greater Canadian content in Japanese vehicles. They said that Canadian industry should benefit from increased Japanese investment and parts sourcing from Canada, as well as the exchange of technology.

Regarding Japanese exports of commercial vehicles, the ministers said they were confident that Japanese exporters would take into account the depressed state of the Canadian market in planning their exports of commercial vehicles to Canada.

The new export forecast by Japan should also improve the investment

climate and confidence within the Canadian automotive industry by providing further time for the industry to complete its restructuring plans and convert its operations to the new generation of fuel-efficient vehicles. The ministers noted that the automotive sector makes a major contribution to the Canadian economy and that certain Canadian industries, including steel, aluminum, plastics, rubber and textiles depend on sales to automotive manufacturers.

The willingness of the Japanese government to find a satisfactory bilateral solution to the automotive issue demonstrates the maturity of Canada-Japan trade relations, said Mr. Lumley. "This understanding reflects the fact that Japan is becoming increasingly sensitized to Canada's distinct economic circumstances, interests and objectives," he added.

Embassy closed in Beirut

Secretary of State for External Affairs Mark MacGuigan announced on August 2 the closing of the Canadian embassy in Beirut.

Canada's Ambassador to Lebanon, Theodore Arcand, has since returned to Canada and will take up the post of Ambassador to Hungary in October. The remaining six Canada-based staff members were moved to Jounieh, 15 kilometres north of the Lebanese capital. Dependents and non-essential Canadian staff had been in Jounieh, a coastal town, since the early days of the crisis.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs said the closing was temporary and that the embassy would re-open as soon as conditions improve. In the meantime, embassy personnel are able to provide some services in Jounieh.

Dr. MacGuigan praised the work of Ambassador Arcand and his staff during eight dangerous and difficult weeks of the crisis and expressed the hope that the tragedy unfolding in Beirut would soon be brought to an end.

The government had previously instructed Canada's Ambassador to Israel to deliver a formal note of protest to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs "because of actions by the Israeli Defence Forces contrary to the Vienna Convention on diplomatic relations". The Canadian government also protested the shelling of the official residence of the Canadian ambassador in Beirut. The Israeli government has since officially apologized for the incidents.