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The UN Conference on Trade and Development

Statement by the Secretary of State for External Affairs,
the Honourable Paul Martin, to the United Nations Conference
on Trade and Development in Geneva, March 24, 1964.

...We are faced today with one of the great opportunities of the twentieth century. Throughout the world, governments and peoples expect this meeting to make definite progress towards a goal which each nation shares - the greater welfare of its people. We must never lose sight, in the long and complex debate, of the urgency of our responsibilities.

All of us recognize that this is an historic conference. It is unprecedented in the breadth of participation and the nature of its objectives. The ability of our United Nations to respond to the needs of member countries is once again being tested. In recent weeks the United Nations and its member governments have been preoccupied with the organization's peace-keeping role - and specifically with the critical situation in Cyprus. During this crisis, Canadians have, as our Prime Minister has said, been proud to play their full part once again. Mr. President, Canada can also be counted on to respond in those areas which are the objectives of this conference. We recognize that prosperity and stability are indivisibly linked.

Since its foundation, the United Nations has played an important and constructive role in the vital sector of economic and trade co-operation among nations. Member countries have joined together to dismantle the barriers to world trade with the aim of ensuring the best use of the world's resources and raising the living standards of the world's peoples. In the interests of expanding world trade, rules have been fashioned as safeguards against the restrictive and discriminatory practices of the past. The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, the International Monetary Fund, the International Bank and other United Nations institutions were set up to buttress the new framework of world trading relationships. This new and more liberal trade system has brought benefits to all the countries of the world. No country is more indebted to these accomplishments than my own, which is so vitally dependent on foreign trade. Canada supports the preservation and development of the basic trade rules and institutions which have been fashioned over the past two decades.