

The Canadian Government welcomes wholeheartedly the attainment today of independence by Belize. As a longstanding supporter of the cause of Belizean independence in the United Nations, Canada takes particular satisfaction in this historic event.

We regret that it has not been possible for Belize to achieve independence with all outstanding issues in the dispute between the United Kingdom and the Republic of Guatemala resolved, but we have noted with confidence the commitment of all parties to work for the promotion and preservation of peace in the region. Because of Canada's special relationship with Belize in the context of the Commonwealth, we would, in the event of an armed attack or threat of attack against Belize from any quarter, be prepared to engage in immediate consultations with the Government of Belize and with other Commonwealth members with a view to considering what efforts might be taken to resolve the matter through peaceful means, such as those provided by the United Nations.

The Canadian Government looks forward to future cooperation with an independent Belize in international fora in pursuing the common goals of peace, prosperity, and justice throughout the world.