



Statements and Speeches

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SAUDI-CANADIAN ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

A Statement to the Press by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, on his Departure from Saudi Arabia, Riyadh, January 15, 1976.

Before I get into the substance of my discussions with Saudi leaders, I want to say that I am delighted to have had this opportunity to escape the Canadian winter and visit Saudi Arabia. I wish to express my warmest thanks to my very kind host, Prince Saud, who, together with his colleagues and officials, has gone out of his way to make my stay here both pleasant and memorable. I should also like to stress how deeply honoured I was to be received yesterday by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Fahd, with whom I had a most interesting exchange of views.

I think all of you are aware that this is my first visit to the Middle East. I have just come from Cairo, where I was received by President Sadat. I had very useful talks with Foreign Minister Fahmy and other leading members of the Egyptian Government; during the next few days, I plan to stop in Jordan, Iraq and Israel. My purpose in coming to the Middle East is to obtain at first hand an appreciation of the problems, achievements and aspirations of the different countries of this region which everyone acknowledges has had, and continues to have, a major place in world history and politics. As the homeland of Islam and as a country whose economic importance is increasing rapidly, Saudi Arabia is an essential part of my itinerary.

In my comprehensive talks with Prince Saud and other ministers, we have sought to find ways and means of further developing the very friendly bilateral relations that already exist between Canada and Saudi Arabia. Our approach has been first to identify various key economic and other objectives of our two countries and then to proceed to a discussion as to how each country can contribute to the realization of these objectives. In this connection, Saudi authorities have briefed me on the impressive aims of the country's five-year development plan, and I have outlined Canadian oil-import needs, investment policies and willingness and ability to contribute to the fulfilment of Saudi development plans in a number of key sectors. Our discussions have revealed that there are many and wide-ranging possibilities for Saudi-Canadian economic co-operation, and that both countries are able and willing to seek closer and mutually-advantageous relations. As a gauge of the seriousness with
