

Remarks of welcome to be made by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Paul Martin at the opening of the 34th session of the International Statistical Institute (Centre Block) August 21, 1963

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Mr. President, your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen:

I am pleased and honoured to welcome you to Canada on behalf of the Canadian Government on the occasion of the 34th session of the International Statistical Institute. I bring you the greetings and the best wishes of the Prime Minister, the Right Honourable L.B. Pearson. Mr. Pearson regrets that he is unable to be here this morning, but he is looking forward to addressing your final dinner on August 28.

Je me réjouis de l'occasion qui m'est offerte de rendre hommage à l'oeuvre des statisticiens du monde entier, et surtout à l'Institut international de la Statistique pour le rôle capital que vous jouez dans la circulation des idées et l'appui que vous apportez au progrès ordonné des affaires politiques, scientifiques et commerciales. Cette conférence réunit un groupe impressionnant de sommités du monde académique et administratif, du monde des affaires et de la science, sous l'égide de la statistique, comme méthode de recherche, d'analyse et de compréhension. J'ai été frappé à la lecture du programme de la conférence par l'étendue des problèmes humains que vous allez étudier. Vous vous consacrez au développement et à la circulation de données précises dans l'intérêt du progrès humain.

We live in a world made small by revolutions in communication and transportation. In international relations the flow of ideas accurately presented and clearly understood is of paramount importance. It is a fact that statistics contribute to this objective in a unique manner. Numbers and symbols are not constrained by the barriers of language. Statistics can convey the most subtle facts with precision and clarity.

It is in this respect that the work initiated by the International Statistical Institute has been of such fundamental importance. It was this body which during the latter part of the 19th century began the vital task of developing international standards and definitions for the presentation of facts in statistical form. Others, of course, have contributed to international standardization of measurement in science and engineering, but it is my impression that the founders of your