

and places great importance on relations with its OAS partners," said Mr. Ouellet. "The visit of Mr. Gaviria is a timely opportunity to discuss in detail the results of the recent Summit of the Americas, Canada's goals in the region, as well as ways of making the OAS more responsive to the changing needs of the region and its members."

STATEMENTS

Canada values highly its trade relationship with the Philippines. In 1993, we enjoyed a two-way trade figure of \$578 million, and it has been growing at about 15 per cent per year for the last two or three years. Philippine imports to Canada are double our exports. But the full extent of Canadian exports is masked by some under-reporting by Statistics Canada due to transshipments through the United States. As well, our considerable service exports are not included in the export data. Still, Canadians are challenged to find new markets, and opportunities abound to increase our economic activity in the Philippines. Now more than ever, the Philippine market is open for business and Canada has excellent products and services to offer. As part of his sweeping reforms, President Ramos has liberalized what was once a highly restricted marketplace for financial services and opened it up for new investors. At the same time he has broadened the opportunities for those already there.

Notes for an Address by the Honourable Raymond Chan, Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific), to the Philippine Canada Trade Council (Vancouver, British Columbia, February 11 1995, 95/11)

DEFENCE

Canada to Send Troops to Haiti

February 17, 1995, NR-95.006

Canada will send a contingent of 500 Canadian Forces peacekeepers to Haiti in response to a request from the United Nations. The contingent will form part of an expanded United Nations Missions in Haiti (UNMIH) and will deploy for a six-month tour of duty. Deployment will begin next week and all troops are scheduled to be in place by the end of March 1995. The Canadian Contingent, commanded by Col. E.A. (Rick) Findley of Ottawa, will consist of engineering, aviation, transportation and administrative support personnel taken primarily from Air Command bases across the country. They will contribute to a more stable environment in Haiti by providing logistical and construction engineering resources to UNMIH operations.

Comander of Land Force Central Area Relieved of Command

February 13, 1995, NR-95.005

The Chief of Defence Staff, General John de Chastelain, has directed that Maj.-Gen. Brian Vernon, Commander of Land Force Central Area, be relieved of his command effective noon February 13. The CDS noted that the preliminary report submitted by Maj.-Gen. Vernon on the recent video depicting initiation practices among members of 1 Commando of the Canadian Airborne Regiment "contained inaccurate and misleading information which caused me to misinform the Minister of National Defence. I hold Maj.-Gen. Vernon fully accountable for his actions."

FINANCE

1995 Budget Information Hotline

February 22, 1995, 95-017

On Monday, February 27, 1995, the Department of Finance will open a national telephone hotline for Canadians who want information/documents pertaining to the 1995 federal Budget. The bilingual telephone hotline will be open on Budget day, Monday February 27, from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. EST. The line will be open Mondays to Fridays from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. EST. Following are the toll-free numbers: 1-800-395-3008 or 1-800-465-7735.

Action Plan Success Permits Tobacco Tax Increase

February 17, 1995, 95-016

Finance Minister Paul Martin took action to permit an increase in federal excise taxes on tobacco products, effective February 18, 1995. In a Ways and Means Motion tabled in the House of Commons, the Government proposed amendments to the Excise Tax Act to increase by \$0.60 per carton of 200 the federal excise taxes imposed on cigarettes intended for retail sale in Quebec and Ontario....The proposed changes will generate an additional \$65 million in federal revenues on a fiscal-year basis.

Canada's Minister of Finance Surprised at Moody's Action Before Budget

February 16, 1995, 95-015

Finance Minister Paul Martin expressed surprise at Moody's decision to put Canada's debt under review shortly before a planned federal budget. "The Government realizes that strong fiscal action is required," the Minister said. "We are taking fundamental action in the upcoming budget to meet our fiscal targets and to stabilize the debt to GDP ratio. This will be done largely by cutting expenditures and on the basis of prudent economic assumptions.... I am confident that the budget will address the concerns expressed by financial markets," he said. "We're going to break the back of this problem."

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 23-24:

U.S. President Clinton Visits Ottawa

March 6-12:

World Summit on Social Development, Copenhagen

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