

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen confirmed today that Canadian authorities were aware that two non-scheduled flights of Cubana Airlines, one en route to Guinea Bissau and one from Brazzaville, landed at Gander on January 13 and 14. Under the Convention on International Civil Aviation, any civil aircraft of any signatory country engaged in non-scheduled civil aviation flights may make technical stops at Gander.

Because these flights were to Guinea Bissau and from Brazzaville, Canadian authorities impressed upon the Cuban authorities on January 21 that their landing privileges in Gander are subject to the requirements of the International Civil Aviation Convention. If flights of any country using Gander are thought to be violating the provisions of the Convention, we shall invoke our right to inspect the aircraft in question.

This matter was raised with Canadian authorities by U.S. officials on January 23. No formal representations were made. As the record shows, Canada had taken action before the matter was raised by U.S. officials, and those officials were so informed.