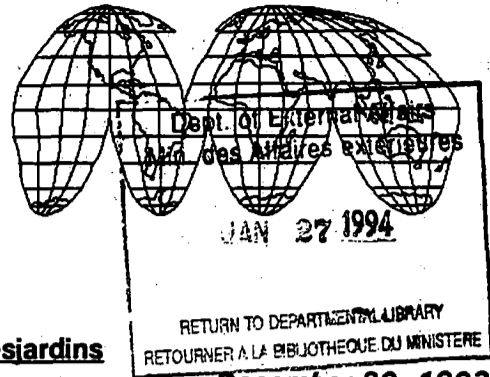


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**December 20, 1993, No. 233****PRESS RELEASES:****The Government of Canada and the Société de développement Desjardins Collaborate on a Project in Russia**

Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet announced a contribution of \$2.5 million to the Société de développement international Desjardins (SDID) for the development of a legal and regulatory framework and a network of 20 agricultural credit unions throughout rural Russia. The project will be implemented by the SDID in collaboration with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and the Russian Committee for Credit Union Development. "I am delighted that the SDID is involved in this project. The SDID is the ideal Canadian partner, given their expertise in establishing agricultural credit unions in Canada," said Mr. Ouellet. The project is part of a five-year, \$150 million technical-assistance program for Russia. Program objectives are to promote the transition to a market-based economy, to support democratic development and to increase Canadian trade and investment.

MacLaren Welcomes Panel's Ruling on Softwood Lumber**December 17, 1993, No. 232**

The Honourable Roy MacLaren, Minister for International Trade, welcomed the ruling by a Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement (FTA) binational panel in the long-standing dispute over Canadian softwood lumber exports to the United States. "The panel result is an important victory which reaffirms the Canadian position that there is no valid basis for the countervailing duty on softwood lumber from Canada," Mr. MacLaren stated. "We fully expect the United States to implement the recommendations of the panel and remove countervailing duties promptly."

Ouellet Deplores Political Violence in El Salvador**December 17, 1993, No. 231**

Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet today deplored the resurgence of political violence in El Salvador. "Although much progress has been made since the end of the civil war last December, the increase in violence in El Salvador could jeopardize the peace process and preparations for the March 1994 elections," said Mr. Ouellet. Christine Stewart, Secretary of State, Latin American and Africa, reaffirmed Canada's support for the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL) during her visit to the United Nations in New York earlier this week. The Mission monitors the implementation of the peace accords, respect for human rights and electoral preparations. Canada has contributed approximately \$240,000 to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) for training and equipping election officials, and to Salvadoran non-governmental organizations to promote electoral participation.

Canada and Russia to Establish Model Forest Project**December 17, 1993, No. 230**

Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet and Natural Resources Minister Anne McLellan today announced that Russia and Canada will work together to establish a model forest in Russia. Russia is the second partner in the International Model Forests Program. "Canada welcomes the opportunity to have Russia as its partner in the International Model Forests Program. Co-operation between countries on difficult sustainable development issues is the key to their resolution. I am certain that this program will be a successful example that we can bring to the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) when it reviews international forests issues in 1995," Mr. Ouellet said.

Ouellet Lauds Anglo-Irish Declaration**December 16, 1993, No. 229**

Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet today welcomed the Joint Declaration on Northern Ireland issued in London on December 15 by Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom, and Prime Minister Albert Reynolds of Ireland. "Prime ministers Major and Reynolds have taken an important step forward in their efforts to achieve peace, stability and reconciliation in Ireland. I hope that those who have pursued their objectives through violence will now have the wisdom to seize this opportunity to reconcile their differences peacefully," Mr. Ouellet said. The principles contained in the joint declaration respect the rights, beliefs and values of both communities in Ireland, and accept the need to proceed with the consent of the people of Northern Ireland. Mr. Ouellet underlined that Canada has long supported efforts to achieve peace in Northern Ireland.

STATEMENTS:

I am pleased to have this opportunity to tell you personally just how important Ukraine is in the view of Canada's new government. We can be proud of the fact that Canada was the first Western country to recognize Ukraine. However, we must also be ready to admit that more must be done to build the special relationship that we all want. We want a real partnership, with stronger ties in every sphere: political, economic, social and trade.... Next year's G-7 Summit in Italy should have Ukraine as a focus. To prepare the way, Canada will encourage the opening of a high-level G-7 dialogue with Kiev.... Without political and