

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, announced today that Canada would be sending a special diplomatic mission to Angola and Mozambique, two Portuguese African territories which are scheduled to become independent later this year. The mission, which is to take place from May 5 to 26, is intended primarily to make a first contact with the provisional governments and future leaders of these countries. It is hoped that the report and recommendations of the mission will assist in the formulation of Canada's policies and future relations with these two important Southern African countries.

The mission will be headed by Mr. Michel Gauvin, Canadian Ambassador to Greece, who is familiar with Africa, having been Chargé d'Affaires in the Congo (now Zaïre) and Ambassador to Ethiopia with accreditation to Madagascar and Somalia. Mr. Gauvin has travelled widely throughout Africa in the course of his seven years of diplomatic service in that continent. He has also represented Canada in Portugal as Secretary (1953-55) and as Ambassador prior to his assignment to Greece.

In making the announcement, the SSEA indicated he hoped that the mission would enable Canada to establish mutually beneficial relations with Angola and Mozambique, and to begin to build meaningful contacts with all the new countries that are emerging from Portugal's African territories.