

Canadian Government Announces Aid Programme And . . .



President Aquino receives Ambassador Russell Davidson at which time the new Canadian aid programme was discussed.

. . . New Ambassador Presents Credentials

Ambassador designate to the Philippines, Russell Davidson, called on President Corazon Aquino on February 28, only days after his arrival in the Philippines, in order to convey personally congratulations from the government of Canada on her inauguration as President of the Philippines. Mr Davidson reiterated the commitment made by Prime Minister Mulroney to the further strengthening of ties between the Philippines and Canada. He was able to reinforce this commitment by informing President Aquino that Canada will provide over \$5 million in assistance to the Philippines. The assistance will be directed to a UNICEF project to buy food for malnourished children, as well as to the Philippine development assistance program to support longer term projects run by Philippine non-governmental organizations to improve living standards and employment opportunities.

Mr Davidson officially presented his credentials to Mrs Aquino on March 26, 1986 becoming the first Ambassador to do so. Mr Davidson joined the Department of External Affairs in 1966. From 1975 to 1976, he was Intergovernmental Coordinator for foreign operations; from 1976 to 1977, Special Advisor, Energy Policy;

from 1977 to 1980, Counsellor, Beijing; from 1980 to 1983, Minister-Counsellor, Mexico City. Since 1983, he has been Director of the East Asia Relations Division of the Department in Ottawa. Mr Davidson replaces Mr Reg H Dorrett who has assumed new responsibilities as Ambassador to Korea.

For further information on material contained in this publication please contact the nearest Canadian diplomatic mission.

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2000.

The Minister for External Relations, the Honourable Monique Vezina, announced that Canada will provide over \$5 million in assistance to the Philippines. "Canada has decided to expand its aid program to the Philippines in response to the new government of President Corazon Aquino" said the Minister. "This \$5 million in assistance reflects our support for that new administration and confidence in the country's future".

This \$5 million will come from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and will fund two separate programs. In the first instance, UNICEF will receive \$300,000 to buy food for 50,000 children suffering from malnutrition. Second, and focusing on the longer term, Canada will be funding the Philippine Development assistance program. Over the next four years CIDA will put forward \$4.8 million to support projects run by community-based Philippine non-governmental organizations (NGOs) designed to improve living standards and employment opportunities. Target groups include tenant farmers, squatters, landless rural workers, fishermen, urban poor, and cultural minorities. Women, out-of-school and unemployed youth, the disabled and handicapped, and the aged are among the sub-targets within these groups. "This program is designed to help the poorest of the poor".

Five Philippine NGO umbrella groups have formed a committee to act as a channel for small NGOs to submit project proposals. Funds to this committee are to be provided through a counterpart committee of Canadian NGOs. "It is the governments intention", said Mme Vezina, "to give as many Canadian NGOs as possible the opportunity to participate in the process encouraging Canadian-Philippine linkages".

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