

CANADIAN-MEXICAN RELATIONS

Diplomatic relations were established between Canada and Mexico in 1944. Exchanges between the two governments have taken many forms including an official visit to Canada by former President Adolfo Lopez Mateos in 1959, with a return visit made by the Right Honourable John Diefenbaker in 1960. In November 1968, a Canadian Ministerial Mission made a visit to Mexico during which a joint Mexico-Canada Committee, at the Ministerial level, was created to provide a continuing forum for periodic consultations on the growing number of political, economic, commercial and cultural matters of interest to both nations. The first meeting of the Canada-Mexico Ministerial Committee took place in Ottawa in October 1971. This meeting marked the opening of a new phase in relations between the two countries and revealed a wide range of common interests. It identified new opportunities for cooperation between Canada and Mexico, and confirmed that, in the process of deepening and strengthening its relationship with Latin America generally, the relationship with Mexico is of key significance.

In March 1973, the President of Mexico and Mrs. Echeverria paid a state visit to Canada. In addition to the ceremonial aspects of the presidential tour, ministers and officials had an opportunity to exchange views on areas of parallel or common interests e.g. relations with the United States, economic and trade diversification, foreign investment, resource management, mineral production, primary commodities, international commodity agreements, etc. A few months later, Mr. Echeverria personally invited several persons from the Federal Government, the Governments of Quebec and Ontario and private enterprise to attend the President's annual "Informe" or state of the nation address to the Mexican Congress.

In the area of trade, Mexican-Canadian relations are regulated by a trade agreement, which came into force in 1947 and which provides for each country to give the other most-favoured nation (MFN) treatment. During the 1960's Canadian exports to Mexico more than doubled while Mexican exports to Canada more than tripled. The total volume of trade between Canada and Mexico in 1972 was valued at \$152 million with Canadian exports amounting to \$100 million. Canadian tourist spending in Mexico brought the balance of payments closer to equilibrium. A trade seminar was held in Toronto in May 1972 to promote trade between Mexico and Canada. This meeting, which was both successful and useful to trade and investment development, emphasized again the substantially complementary nature of the Canadian and Mexican economies and the close affinity which exists between Canadian industrial capability in specialized sectors and Mexican requirements.

Canada and Mexico, as important coastal states, share a common interest and concern in discussions on the Law of the Sea and have worked closely to resolve outstanding international problems. More particularly, Mexico has been promoting the concept of the "patrimonial sea", which is close to the position favoured by Canada, i.e. that of the establishment of limited forms of jurisdiction for limited purposes, as opposed to the advancement of acquisitive claims over off-shore areas. On December 29, 1972, Canada became one of the first nations