

On behalf of the Canadian Government, I thank the authorities of the Arab Republic of Egypt, particularly Foreign Minister Fahmy, for the kind invitation which enabled me to come to Cairo and for the generous hospitality they extended to me and to members of my delegation. This is my first official visit to Egypt -- indeed my first to the Middle East, at the beginning of a two-week tour which will also bring me to Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Iraq and Israel. This journey gives concrete expression to the declared policy of my government to strengthen and expand Canada's relations with this region of the world. Accordingly, it is my hope that our discussions with Foreign Minister Fahmy and other Egyptian leaders will give a fresh impetus to bilateral relations between Egypt and Canada in all fields. While this is the major purpose of my visit to Cairo, I also welcome this opportunity to establish personal contact with Egyptian leaders and review with them a number of multi-lateral issues of utmost importance for our two countries such as current efforts, within international organizations and at the Paris Conference on International Economic Co-operation, to establish a new world economic order more favourable to developing countries: on-going developments at the United Nations; the international security situation including recent serious developments in Lebanon and Angola, as well as other developments in the Middle East and the prospects for eventual negotiation of a just and stable peace in this region.

I thought it useful, before answering questions, to summarize Canadian views and positions on some of these questions.

While not extensive, political relations between Egypt and Canada have remained friendly ever since the two countries exchanged diplomatic missions in 1955. Despite the diversity of their national interests, resulting from their quite different geopolitical, economic and cultural circumstances, our two countries have often found that their perspectives and positions on international issues were similar or convergent. There are questions, of course, on which our governments have occasionally differed or disagreed; but generally speaking, these differences have not cast a shadow over our overall bilateral relationship, because each country had a proper understanding of the other's positions and a proper respect for each other's values and aspirations.

During the last twenty years, a pattern of constructive co-operation on multilateral issues has consequently emerged between Egypt and Canada; and this co-operation has intensified in recent years, as our two governments came to share more than ever before a common approach to world affairs. Both Egypt and