

Republic of Burkina Faso

(formerly Upper Volta)

Date of Independence: August 5, 1960
Capital: Ouagadougou
Population: 6,660,000
Head of State and President of the National Revolutionary Council: His Excellence Captain Thomas Sankara
National Revolutionary Council:
Economy:

Very poor country with a subsistence farm economy. The remittances sent home by the 1.6 million emigrant workers contribute significantly to the balance of payments.

Canada/Burkina Faso Relations: Canada's relations with this country date back to 1962. For financial and administrative reasons, Canada closed its embassy in Ouagadougou, and Burkina Faso, stating similar reasons, withdrew its representatives from Ottawa. However, Canada has a major aid program in Burkina Faso and CIDA maintains a co-operation office there. The assistance to be provided in 1985-86 is estimated at \$16.1 million, including food aid and special programs.

His Excellency Captain Thomas Sankara: Born in 1949. Attended the paratrooper school in Pau, France, in 1974. Commanded a parachute detachment. Became Secretary of State for Information in 1981, and Prime Minister in February 1983. Arrested in May 1983; released in June. Led a coup against Major Ouedraogo on August 4, 1983. President of the National Revolutionary Council and Head of State.