



DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES EXTÉRIEURES

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MEETING OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTERS  
IN DAKAR ON DECEMBER 8 AND 9, 1980

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, Dr. Mark MacGuigan, announces that in response to the invitation of His Excellency Léopold Sedor Senghor, President of Senegal, he will participate as Head of the Canadian Delegation at the meeting of Foreign Affairs Ministers to be held in Dakar on December 8 and 9. The Honourable Pierre De Bané will also be on the delegation in his capacity as Adviser to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. The governments of Quebec and New Brunswick have each been invited to appoint one senior official who would be named an **adviser on the Canadian Delegation**.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs had an opportunity today in Ottawa to discuss the issue of Quebec representation with Claude Morin, Quebec's Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. Mr. MacGuigan first of all explained how the ministerial meeting in Dakar was fundamentally different from meetings of the existing organizations of "La Francophonie internationale", and why a separate provincial representation was therefore inappropriate. He then explained that the federal government's proposal respects the provisions of the Canadian constitution in matters of foreign policy, and that it is in harmony with the usages and customs of international law as well as with current practice for international meetings of this kind. Mr. MacGuigan added that Canada's participation in this meeting was a matter of exclusive federal jurisdiction and concerned only Canada. In these circumstances, it would be inappropriate to go outside our country to seek to involve other countries in a matter which can only be settled within Canada.

The meeting of December 8 and 9 is a meeting of Foreign Affairs Ministers, and this implies ministers from independent countries. It is clear that, internationally, a country can have only one minister, one spokesman, one voice. Moreover, the meeting will discuss primarily organizational and procedural matters in connection with a new initiative, i.e., an "organic community". The Ministers will prepare the agenda for a future conference of **Heads of State and government of independent countries which use French, to varying degrees, as a language of communication.**