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CANADA/UNITED STATES TALKS ON TRANSBOUNDARY AIR QUALITY

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, Flora MacDonalld, today released a Joint Statement on transboundary air quality, which has been agreed to by the Governments of Canada and the United States. The statement was simultaneously released by the United States Government.

The Joint Statement announces the intention of both governments to move their discussions beyond the informal stage to develop a co-operative agreement on air quality, and lists some principles to be addressed in developing such an agreement.

The Joint Statement also outlines the basis of existing co-operation between the two countries, notes recent informal discussions on transboundary air quality and concludes that a basis exists for development of a co-operative bilateral agreement on air quality.

In releasing the Joint Statement, the two governments expressed satisfaction at this step forward in the efforts that both countries have been making to deal with transboundary air pollution. However, because of the complexity of the economic, scientific and technical aspects of the problem and differences in the two countries' legislative structures, the negotiation of a mutually acceptable agreement is an important undertaking which will take time to accomplish. Both governments will be actively pursuing discussions for this purpose, recognizing that both countries contribute to transboundary air pollution including the "acid rain" phenomenon which affects the environment of both Canada and the United States, and believing that this problem can be dealt with most effectively on a co-operative basis.