

Republic of Djibouti

Date of Independence:	June 27, 1977
Capital:	Djibouti
Population:	450,000
Head of State and Head of Government	His Excellency Hassan Gouled Aptidon
Economy:	Mainly a service economy. Persistent drought. Provides essential ocean access for Ethiopia. French military presence (force of 3,700) accounts for 44% of the national budget.

Canada/Djibouti Relations: Our ambassador is accredited from Addis Ababa and visits Djibouti occasionally; Djibouti has an honorary consul in Montreal. The bilateral co-operation program is limited to activities administered by the Mission. Since 1982-83, some \$50,000 has been provided per year to support small projects and award bursaries for Djibouti nationals to study in Canada. Canadian companies have expressed interest in projects to upgrade the airport and the telecommunications system, but the Djibouti government does not really have the means to finance large-scale commercial projects.

His Excellency Hassan Gouled Aptidon: Born in 1916 in Djibouti; belongs to the Issa ethnic group. Played an active role in domestic politics and was a member of the French National Assembly. In the May 8, 1977 election, he headed the single list for the Rassemblement populaire pour l'indépendance. On May 16, became President of the Council of Ministers. On June 24, he was elected President of the Republic, which was proclaimed on June 27. Re-elected for six years on June 12, 1981.