

Memorandum of Understanding between Canada and Mexico on Co-operation in Telecommunications

During the eighth meeting of the Canada-Mexico Joint Ministerial Committee, held in Mexico City, November 25 to 26, 1991, Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs, Barbara McDougall, and Mexico's Minister of Foreign Affairs Fernando Solana, signed a Letter of Intent on future co-operation in telecommunications.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that will be signed by the Honourable Perrin Beatty, Minister of Communications in Mexico on April 4, creates a new framework for co-operation between Canada and Mexico in the field of telecommunications. The agreement is between Communications Canada and its counterpart in Mexico, the Secretariat of Communications and Transportation.

The MOU will establish the basis for discussions aimed at improving co-operation and understanding of technical requirements; increasing co-operation in research and development; gaining support in multilateral forums, such as the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), INTELSAT and INMARSAT; developing and improving telecommunications satellite technology between the two nations, co-ordinating frequency usage, such as regulating and managing the radio frequency spectrum along the Mexico-U.S. border (Canada's expertise in this area grew primarily out of the challenge of regulating and managing the radio frequency spectrum along and north of the Canada-U.S. border); discussing the exchanges of experts; and sharing experiences on regulatory and policy matters. Other benefits include access to key decision-makers, which is a crucial element toward fostering Canada's commercial interests in the Mexican telecommunications market.

The MOU has been greeted very enthusiastically by Canada's telecommunications industry. It represents an opportunity for both countries to further develop their mutual interests in telecommunications. The scope of the Mexican market opens up significant potential for Canadian industry to participate in the modernization of Mexico's telecommunications sector. For example, at present, there are eight telephones for every 100 people in Mexico. Mexico has set a goal of 30 per cent telephone penetration by the year 2000. Canadian technology is helping to fulfil this vision. Canadian exports of telecommunications equipment and services to Latin America exceeded \$100 million in 1991.