

**PRESS RELEASE**



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Attached is a joint communique issued following the visit to Canada of His Excellency Habib Bourguiba, President of the Republic of Tunisia, May 8 to 12, 1968.

State Visit of the President of the Republic of Tunisia

Joint Communiqué

At the invitation of the Canadian Government, the President of the Republic of Tunisia, His Excellency Habib Bourguiba paid a state visit to Canada, May 8-12. During his stay, he visited Ottawa, Montreal and Niagara Falls. The President was accompanied by His Excellency Habib Bourguiba Jr., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; His Excellency Chedly Klibi, Secretary of State for Cultural Affairs and Information; Mr. Abderrazak Rassaa, Under-Secretary of State for Finance and Development; and Mr. Lassaad Ben Osman, Under-Secretary of State for Agriculture.

On his arrival in Montreal, he was welcomed by the Honourable Maurice Sauvé, Minister of Forestry and Rural Development; the Honourable Jean-Jacques Bertrand, Minister of Justice of the Province of Quebec; and Mr. Lucien Saulnier, President of the Executive Committee of Montreal. In Ottawa, he was received by the Governor General, His Excellency the Right Honourable Roland Michener, C.C.; the Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Pierre Elliott Trudeau, and the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Mitchell Sharp. In the course of their conversations, the President and the Prime Minister discussed a number of major international questions. They had an exchange of views on La Francophonie, and agreed that this must develop in a way which would permit increasingly close relations between the countries which share a heritage of French culture and language. The President explained the Tunisian viewpoint on the question of the Middle East, and they underlined the importance of finding a solution which would be consistent with justice and a lasting peace in the region. For that purpose, they expressed their support for the efforts the United Nations is making to find a solution, particularly with respect to the mission of Ambassador Jarring.

The President and the Prime Minister devoted particular attention to bilateral questions of interest to their two countries. They expressed satisfaction with the rapid progress Tunisia and Canada are making in developing bonds of friendship and co-operation.

During his stay in Montreal, the President was received by the Prime Minister of Quebec, the Honourable Daniel Johnson, and the Mayor of Montreal, His Worship Jean Drapeau, who jointly gave a luncheon in his honour. The President was invested with an honorary degree by the University of Montreal. On this occasion, he gave a speech. The President took advantage of his stay in Montreal to visit Terre des Hommes, where he gave a dinner in honour of Prime Minister Johnson and Mayor Drapeau at the Tunisian pavillion.

The President expressed his hope that the Canadian Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for External Affairs would be able to visit Tunisia on dates which would be convenient for them.

The Government of Canada stated that it wished to support the achievement of the next Tunisian plan for economic development. The programme of Canadian assistance to Tunisia has amounted over the past few years to approximately \$2 million annually. The Prime Minister also mentioned that Canada expects to grant substantial food aid to Tunisia.

In the course of the conversations which took place between the representatives of the two countries, the two sides agreed to create a mixed Canadian-Tunisian Commission which would meet at regular intervals to discuss questions of common interest such as assistance, trade and cultural exchanges. It was expected that the first meeting of the commission would take place next October in Tunis.

A special Canadian mission under the direction of the Honourable Lionel Chevrier recently visited Tunisia with the aim of strengthening the Canadian programme of assistance to Tunisia. The grant by the Canadian government of increased food aid for 1968-69 marks a first step in the implementation of the commitments made by the Chevrier mission. The Canadian government will make every effort to carry out rapidly the other commitments made by the Canadian mission in the fields of capital aid projects and technical assistance. These subjects will be reviewed next October at the first meeting of the mixed commission, which will also examine the kinds of support which Canada will give to the achievement of the economic plan and the possibilities of assistance in the development of fisheries and hydraulics.

The President expressed his gratitude to the Government and people of Canada for the warm welcome he received. He expressed his admiration for the progress accomplished by Canada since 1961, when he first visited the country, and for the spectacular achievements which he remarked wherever he went.