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FIRST MEETING OF CANADA-ZAIREAN BILATERAL COMMISSION NOVEMBER 23-25, 1981

The Honourable Mark MacGuigan, Secretary of State for External Affairs, announced today that Citizen Lengema Dulia Yubasa Makanga, Secretary of State for International Co-operation with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation of Zaire, paid an official visit to Canada from November 23 to 25, 1981 at the head of a large delegation on the occasion of the first meeting of the Canada-Zairean Bilateral Commission.

The Honourable Serge Joyal, Minister of State, headed the Canadian delegation to this meeting, which was held at the headquarters of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) in Hull on November 23 and 24, 1981.

Citizen Lengema's visit to Canada provided an opportunity to examine the many aspects of Canada-Zairean relations in private discussions with the Honourable Serge Joyal and the Honourable Pierre De Bané, who was given a personal message from President Mobutu for Prime Minister Trudeau by Citizen Lengema. On November 24, Mr. De Bané hosted a dinner on behalf of the Canadian government in honour of Secretary of State Lengema and the Zairean delegation. The Secretary of State for International Co-operation of Zaire also met with Mr. Jacques Gignac, Deputy Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs.

These talks, which were held in an open, cordial atmosphere, were characterized by a considerable convergence of viewpoints between the two countries. Canadian and Zairean representatives alike expressed their desire to combine all their efforts in order to expand and further develop Canada-Zairean relations, both bilaterally and multilaterally.

On the subject of the co-operation programme, the two sides discussed ongoing projects and laid the foundation for future operations based on two priority sectors, namely rural development and forestry. The Zairean side expressed its satisfaction with Canada's decision to continue to provide support for projects under way and to increase its financial and technical assistance by the introduction of new co-operation mechanisms.

The parties examined a number of new projects that would contribute to the economic and social development of Zaire in the coming years. Canada gave assurances that it would co-operate actively toward speedily achieving the goals that had been set, within the limits of the available financial and human resources.

Also examined by the two delegations was the state of trade relations between the two countries. They agreed to seek ways of increasing the volume of exchanges.

The delegations were pleased with the constructive, open climate that characterized the work. They observed that the positive results derived from the meeting would doubtless give fresh impetus to co-operation between the two countries.

Heartfelt thanks were expressed by the Zairean delegation to the Canadian government for the warm reception it had received while in Canada.