

PRESS RELEASE

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS



CANADA

COMMUNIQUÉ

MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES EXTÉRIEURES

No. 19

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY, MARCH 20, 1964

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Paul Martin, will lead the Canadian Delegation to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development which opens in Geneva, Switzerland, on March 23, and will attend the opening session of Ministers from the participating countries. It is expected that Mr. Martin will proceed to Geneva over the weekend of March 21-22 returning at the end of the week. The Permanent Head of the Canadian Delegation is Mr. L. Dana Wilgress.*

The Conference, which will continue until mid-June, is being convened by the United Nations to consider and seek solutions for the trade and development problems of the less developed countries of the world. All members of the United Nations and specialized agencies have been invited and it is estimated that some 1,500 participants and observers will attend. On March 23 the Conference will be opened formally by the United Nations Secretary General, U Thant. The Secretary of State for External Affairs will be among the speakers addressing the Conference the following day.

. . . 2

* Mr. Wilgress' appointment was announced by the Secretary of State for External Affairs on January 31.

The holding of this Conference on trade and development, which was endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly in 1962, reflects the growing recognition of the contribution which expanded international trade can make to economic and social progress throughout the world, and of the importance of international co-operative action to meet the special trade problems of the less developed countries. Economic aid from the advanced countries including Canada has played and will continue to play an essential role in helping the less developed countries. These countries are now seeking to increase their export earnings as a means of accelerating their economic development and raising their living standards.

Over the past year a thirty-two country Preparatory Committee, of which Canada was a member, has identified the problems to be placed before the Conference and suggested lines of action along which solutions might be found. The Conference will examine ways in which less developed countries can increase their share in the expansion of world trade. It will consider proposals for eliminating barriers to world trade in primary commodities and stabilizing world commodity prices. The less developed countries have emphasized their desire to increase their exports of processed, semi-manufactured and manufactured goods as a means of increasing export receipts and diversifying their economies. They have called for international action to assist less developed countries overcome problems resulting from shortfalls in export earnings. Co-operative action along these and other lines is being sought

- 3 -

within the United Nations to assist the less developed countries through international trade to accelerate their development. Such co-operation is necessary if progress is to be made at a sufficiently rapid pace and in ways which will minimize problems and adjustments for the economies of advanced countries.

The Commonwealth delegations to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development are attending a prior meeting in London on March 19-20 for an exchange of views on the Conference. The Canadian High Commissioner in London, the Honourable Lionel Chevrier, will represent Canada at this meeting, assisted by Mr. L. D. Wilgress.

- 30 -