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NOTES FOR THE STATEMENT
BY MR. PIERRE DE BANE,
PARLEMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,
HEAD OF THE CANADIAN OBSERVER DELEGATION,
TO THE THIRD REGULAR SESSION OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE
ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES
WASHINGTON D.C., APRIL 4 - 14, 1973

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES EXTÉRIEURES

Mr Chairman, Mr Secretary General, distinguished Ministers and representatives, fellow Permanent Observers, ladies and gentlemen: it is an honour for me to address this Third Regular Session of the General Assembly of the OAS. A year has passed since Canada became a Permanent Observer to the OAS. That step was taken as part of the Canadian policy of intensifying relations with Latin American countries and the institutions of the inter-American family. It engages the interests not only of the Canadian Government but of many Canadian organizations and of individual Canadians at all levels.

2. In fulfilling Canada's declared undertaking to draw closer to Latin America, we have taken a number of other steps during the last year. Many of these are directly identified with the Inter-American community. Among the most important was our accession to full membership in the BID on May 3. By that step, Canada associated itself directly with the developmental aspirations of the countries of the Hemisphere. In concrete terms, it involved a Canadian commitment to contribute one hundred million dollars to the resources of the bank over the next three years. Canada is already playing a full and active role in the Bank's Board of Directors and there is keen interest in Canada in the Bank's operations and future plans.

3. On November 4 of last year, Canada became a member of the Inter-American Institute of Agriculture Sciences. We intend to play an active part in the work of the Institute which will enable us to share our experience in rural development with the countries of the hemisphere. We have also participated in some of the major inter-American meetings held under OAS auspices. These include the CACTAL meeting held in Brasilia last May, the Annual Meeting of CIECC in Argentina in December, and the recently concluded meeting of CIES in Bogota.

4. The activities of our mission to the OAS have brought Canada into close and continuous contact with persons of the organization at all levels. I wish now to pay tribute to the unfailing courtesy, helpfulness and interest that has been shown to us on all occasions by the Secretariat. We are also deeply grateful to the member delegates of the OAS who have never failed to make Canada feel welcome in their midst.

5. This Assembly's Agenda and the discussions at recent meetings have made it clear, that this is a time of transition for the OAS. We see the OAS engaged in a fundamental review and reassessment of its structures and activities, charting new paths for the future and considering how to involve non-member

countries and even non-hemispheric countries in its developmental activities. Canada is being consulted informally on some of these questions and I would like to take this opportunity to make a few general comments on how we see the situation and the possibilities.

6. At the risk of repeating what has been said at previous Assemblies, I would like to outline to you the current Canadian outlook on the future of our relations with the OAS. The Canadian foreign policy paper of 1970 envisaged a formal link with the OAS in order to facilitate the rapid development of Canada's relations with Latin American countries and institutions. Our purpose was to "prepare for a better informed and more useful Canadian participation as a full member of the OAS should Canada, at some future date, opt for full participation". The future of Canada's association with the OAS will depend, therefore, to some extent, on the results of the process of review and revision of institutional structures and objectives that is now in progress. There has been a substantial shift of emphasis in Latin America, as elsewhere, to economic and social problems. This is a shift we welcome because it is to your social and economic activities that we see Canada as being able to make the most useful and effective contribution. I must tell you quite candidly, however, that we are disturbed by the atmosphere of confrontation which we have detected in some of the recent discussions about the problems of the hemisphere. We do not think that this is conducive to the solution of our problems. (The recent decision on an application for Permanent Observer status by a country that contributes significantly to the technical assistance programs of this Organization, will inevitably raise questions as to whether there is a real and serious desire on the part of members of the OAS for wider participation by non-members in inter-American cooperation for development.) At a time when the conduct of international affairs generally appears to be moving from confrontation to negotiation and cooperation, I think it would be unproductive for us in this hemisphere to appear to be moving in the opposite direction. Certainly it would be Canada's hope that we could manage to stem this trend and join our efforts in trying to find concrete solutions to the issues on which we diverge and to the problems we share in common.

7. The economic and social activities of the OAS, as well as those in the fields of science, education and culture, are of increasing interest to Canadians. There is already evidence of Canadian cooperation in these programs. During the past year, in addition to the steps I mentioned earlier, Canada has attended, on a fairly regular basis, the CIAP country reviews. Canada has recently entered into technical and financial cooperation with the OAS in a number of specific areas: the pilot project for transfer of technology; the public finance program; the labour and employment program; and the program of the regional development office. In some cases, this cooperation has been arranged through our Canadian International Development Agency and, in others, through the International Development Research Centre in Ottawa, and through various governmental departments.

8. We have noted with interest the mandate given by the CIES at Bogota to that distinguished Inter-American public servant, Dr Carlos Sanz de Santamaria, to reformulate the bases of the Inter-American system of cooperation for development. It is only proper, of course, that the members of this organization should be the first to be able to express their views on this fundamental question. But Canada is also a country of the hemisphere and the patterns of hemispheric cooperation are of importance to us. That is why we decided to establish the form of close association we now have with the OAS. We look forward, therefore, to making some constructive contributions to Dr Sanz de Santamaria's work and to the task of harmonizing viewpoints and, hopefully, arriving at solutions that will be effective in serving the interests of the many diverse countries that make up our hemispheric community.

9. Without anticipating the Canadian contribution to this examination, I wonder whether there are not a number of areas where our points of view and our interests converge? In monetary reform, for example, Canada has supported the concept that the developing countries should participate in the negotiations looking towards a new international monetary system and we are pleased that Latin America has three representatives on the Committee of 20.

10. In trade, Canada and Latin America have mutual interests in strengthening commercial ties and expanding exchanges of goods and services. We hope for the fullest participation by Latin American countries in the 1973 round of multilateral tariff negotiations to ensure that all sections of the international community share as fully as possible in the benefits which will result from the progressive liberalization of international trade. In connection with the generalized system of preferences, which is, of course, of interest to all developing countries, my Government recently confirmed its intention to submit to Parliament in the very near future the legislation to permit Canadian implementation of this scheme.

11. Extensive foreign investment in Canada has been sought and welcomed in the past and it has brought us great benefits. More recently, however, Canadians have become increasingly concerned about the extent to which major Canadian industries are owned and controlled outside our country. As a consequence of that concern, legislation has been brought before our Parliament which provides that the "significant benefit" to Canada will be the best by which takeovers of Canadian companies or the establishment of new companies by foreign or multinational investments will be judged.

12. In questions of the environment and the Law of the Sea, Canada, with its vast unoccupied spaces, its growing urban and industrial concentrations and its extensive coastline, also has much in common with Latin America.

13. In the field of technical assistance, Canada has had for a few years now an on-going and increasing program of cooperation with several Latin American countries, concentrated in the fields of agriculture, fisheries and forestry, education, community development and public administration. We value the opportunities that CIAP provides for consultation and coordination of these activities; we believe that these procedures can be improved and lead to further progress.

14. Science and technology is an area of particular interest to Canada in its relations with the rest of the Hemisphere. On the one hand, Canada has been, like Latin America, dependent on external sources for much of the research and technology that has contributed to our development. On the other hand, Canada possesses know-how and experience in a wide range of scientific fields that can undoubtedly be of use and interest to Latin America.

15. These examples are enough to demonstrate that there are many possibilities of enhanced cooperation between Latin America and Canada. We would welcome any steps that will lend substance to these possibilities.

16. I have already indicated our uneasiness in Canada about some of the trends toward polarization rather than cooperation in the inter-American community. On the positive side, we have noted the dynamic changes and the increasing pluralism in the Latin American countries evolving in so many different political, economic, social and cultural configurations. They present this Organization with stimulating opportunities and a great challenge.

17. In the hope and expectation that the outcome will be positive, progressive and relevant to our common interests, we look forward to exploring over the next months the possibilities of strengthening Canada's contribution to the concept of the development and social progress of all the people of the Hemisphere.