



communiqué

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OFFICIAL VISIT TO BELGRADE AND ATHENS

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, Dr. Mark MacGuigan, announced today he will pay official visits to Yugoslavia on April 20-21, 1981, and to Greece on April 22-23, 1981.

Canada's bilateral relations with the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia have developed favourably and steadily since diplomatic relations were established in 1948, particularly in the economic field. The forthcoming visit will provide an opportunity for Dr. MacGuigan to review the international situation with Yugoslav Federal Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Josip Vrhovec, with particular emphasis on East-West Relations, the North-South Summit and the Middle East. The ministers will also exchange views on the future development of Canada's bilateral relationship with Yugoslavia.

Dr. MacGuigan's visit to Belgrade will continue the pattern whereby the Canadian and Yugoslav foreign ministers meet periodically either in respective capitals or during United Nations and other international conferences, to consult on matters of mutual interest.

Relations between Canada and Greece have traditionally been cordial, and this official visit will serve to strengthen existing ties which are enhanced by the large communities of Canadians of Greek origin in Canada and the many Greek-Canadians in Greece. A highlight of the visit will be the signing of a Reciprocal Social Security Agreement between the two countries. This agreement will co-ordinate the operation of Canada's Old Age Security Programme and the Canada Pension Plan with the corresponding Greek programmes. Dr. MacGuigan will also review with his Greek counterpart a broad range of current bilateral and international issues.

Dr. MacGuigan's visit to Athens will provide an opportunity for a more extensive meeting than the periodic exchanges during the year between Canadian and Greek Foreign Ministers which take place at the United Nations where Dr. MacGuigan had discussions with Foreign Minister Constantine Mitsotakis in September 1980, and at North Atlantic Treaty Organization ministerial meetings. Former Foreign Minister of Greece, Dimitrios Bitsios, visited Ottawa in October 1976 and then Secretary of State for External Affairs, Don Jamieson, visited Athens in November 1977.