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OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE  
MINISTER FOR EXTERNAL RELATIONS  
TO TUNISIA AND MOROCCO FROM FEBRUARY 8-16, 1982

The Honourable Pierre De Bané, Minister for External Relations, today announced that he will visit Tunisia and Morocco from February 8 to 16 to preside over the Bilateral Commission meetings between Canada and these two Maghreb countries. He will be accompanied by a delegation of officials from various departments and twenty or so Canadian businessmen whose companies wish to extend their activities into this region.

The meeting of the eighth session of the Canada-Tunisian Commission comes as a sequel to the visits to Canada during 1981 of Mr. Mohamed Chaker and Mr. Mansour Moalla, the Tunisian Ministers of Justice and Finance. Its main purpose is to mark a change of emphasis to relations of a more economic nature with a country that has traditionally been a major recipient of Canadian aid in Africa.

During his stay, Mr. De Bané will meet with Prime Minister Mohamed Mzali and with Minister of Foreign Affairs Beji Caid Essebsi to discuss Canada-Tunisia relations in general and to consider new perspectives for co-operation in the coming years. He will also meet with a number of ministers having economic and technical portfolios to examine Canadian participation in the Sixth Tunisian Development Plan and to establish with them the terms and conditions of this contribution. Finally, during his visit to Tunis,

Mr. De Bané will discuss the latest developments in Maghreb and the Middle East with Mr. Chedli Klibi, Secretary General of the Arab League.

The Canada-Morocco Commission will meet for the first time after its establishment last October during the visit to Ottawa of Mr. M'Hamed Boucetta, Minister of Foreign Affairs. This new institutional structure arose out of the need to have a consultative framework with a country that already ranks third among Canada's trading partners in Africa. It also has the purpose of establishing with Morocco new forms of co-operation based mainly on the use of parallel credits, investment promotion, scientific and technical exchanges and co-operation among institutions.

Mr. De Bané will be received by His Majesty King Hassan II and will meet with Prime Minister Maati Bouabid, both of whom were hosts to Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau last summer, and, more recently, the Speaker of the Senate, the Honourable Jean Marchand and the Speaker of the House of Commons, the Honourable Jeanne Sauvé. Mr. De Bané will also engage in a series of ministerial talks designed to set forth the conditions for future co-operation between Canada and Morocco.