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CHANGE OF STATUS OF THE CANADIAN CONSULATES IN RIO DE JANEIRO AND SAO PAULO, BRAZIL

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mark MacGuigan, announced today that the status of the Canadian Consulates in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo, Brazil, has been raised to the level of Consulate-General.

This action has been taken in order to reflect the current importance of the programmes carried out by these two missions in the context of Canada's increasingly important relations with Brazil. The Consulates-General principally carry out commercial functions but they are also responsible for administering consular, public affairs and immigration programmes.

Canada's representation in Rio de Janeiro is one of the oldest in Latin America, dating back to 1941 and the establishment of the Canadian Legation in what was then the capital city of Brazil. In 1944 the Legation was raised to the status of an Embassy and in 1972, when the Canadian Embassy was moved to Brasilia following the transfer of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to that city, a Consulate was opened in Rio de Janeiro to maintain the links established over the past 30 years. In the subsequent period Canadian interests in Brazil have increased in trade, consular and public affairs fields and the new status of Consulate-General reflects the increased importance and responsibilities of Canada's representation in Rio de Janeiro.

The Canadian Consulate in Sao Paulo was established in 1947 and in the subsequent years Canadian commercial and consular interests in that city of 12 million, which is the centre of Brazilian industry and commerce, have increased steadily. As in the case of Rio de Janeiro, the new status of Consulate-General in Sao Paulo reflects the increased importance and responsibilities of Canada's representation in Sao Paulo.

Mr. Marc G. Lemieux, Consul and Trade Commissioner in Rio de Janeiro, will become Consul-General and Trade Commissioner in Rio de Janeiro; Mr. Victor G. Lotto, Consul and Trade Commissioner in Sao Paulo, will become Consul-General and Trade Commissioner in Sao Paulo.