

# Statement

Secretary of  
State for  
External Affairs



# Déclaration

Secrétaire  
d'État aux  
Affaires  
extérieures

90/04

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STATEMENT BY

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JOE CLARK,

AT THE DINNER ON THE OCCASION OF THE

VIIITH SESSION OF THE MEXICO-CANADA

JOINT MINISTERIAL COMMISSION

OTTAWA

January 22, 1990.

Secretary Solana,

It is a great honour to Canada that such a large number of distinguished Ministers from Mexico would brave our winter to take part in the 7th meeting of the Canada-Mexico Joint Ministerial Committee.

This is a clear demonstration of President Salinas' decision to make improved relations with Canada a priority for his Administration, a decision which we applaud.

The range of bilateral issues being discussed during our meetings is wide and substantive. It includes:

- environmental cooperation;
- agricultural cooperation in livestock development, animal health and research;
- development of joint forestry projects;
- improved systems of statistics to better understand the full scope of the relationship between our two countries;
- enhanced tourism in both directions;
- increased Canadian trade and investment in Mexico;
- legal cooperation and joint action on drugs.

Those issues demonstrate the great potential which exists in the Canada-Mexico relationship. Your visit here is crucial to expanding and deepening our partnership.

Mr. Secretary, for well over 100 years, Canadian traders, investors, teachers and missionaries have been active throughout Mexico and the rest of Latin America. They have built railways and electric powerplants. They have helped to create banks and insurance companies. They have worked in developing agriculture and they have collaborated in building successful trade networks between the countries of the region and the rest of the world. And they have been in the forefront of the struggle for human rights in those countries where abuses persist.

For generations, Canadians have been partners in the development of the region. We have decided to become even more engaged in the years ahead. For Canada, Mexico is the key country in our pursuit of closer ties and increased understanding in this hemisphere.

Mr. Secretary, we are in the midst of a period of unprecedented change. In recent months, world attention has focused on the remarkable events taking place in Eastern Europe: the triumph of the human spirit, the collapse of dictatorships, and the opening of economies.

But these dramatic developments are but one part of a global phenomenon. Throughout much of the world - in Asia, in parts of Africa and in Latin America - democracy has won many victories and human rights are enjoying a welcome new respect. Here, too, societies are acknowledging the failures of command economies, and are turning to the market place in record numbers.

Latin America has made tremendous strides in recent years. Democracy is now the rule rather than the exception. Equally, governments - including particularly the Government of Mexico - have taken brave steps to open their economies and recover from the legacy of the past.

The courage of your government in addressing the many challenges before it is admired by Canada and we encourage you to stay your current course. Canadian banks have demonstrated a renewed confidence in the Mexican economy. And the Canadian government has the greatest faith in your future.

I have spoken of the great strides being made towards democracy and economic development throughout Latin America. However, democracy is a fragile flower and must grow firm roots. We must work together to ensure that our current hopes do not become future disappointments.

Latin America bears its share of the problems which together constitute a new type of threat to global security. I speak here of the debt crisis, the decimation of the environment, the scourge of drugs, and the suffering which accompanies senseless regional conflicts.

These problems cannot be addressed by national effort alone. The problems are international in scope. Their solutions must also be international in nature.

And they require unprecedented co-operation between the developed and developing world in seeking creative solutions. These are problems which do not know borders. They are problems which afflict the security of the developed world as much as they do the developing world.

I have been heartened by the new pragmatism and realism shown by many countries in approaching this panoply of problems. Nations in the North as well as in the South seem to have accepted that ideology is no recipe for success and the ascription of blame is no basis for progress.

Mr. Secretary, the discussions we have had today - and which will continue tomorrow - are an example of the reasoned dialogue which is necessary and possible between two countries which are aware of the severity of the problems at hand and have accepted their responsibility to seek practical solutions.

Recognizing the great promise and challenges which lie ahead for this hemisphere, Canada has joined the Organization of American States. This institution - with all its faults - is the singular instrument for cooperative action involving all countries in the region. For Canada, the well-known shortcomings of the OAS were not a reason to stay outside. They were reasons to become involved, to explore with others the possibilities of improvement, to take an active role in making the OAS work.

Mr. Secretary, the wisdom and experience of your country in the OAS, as within the region, is of immense value to us. It is my hope that in our discussions tomorrow, we will be able to jointly identify concrete ways to improve the machinery of the OAS - to make it both more relevant and effective as a forum for co-operation and joint action.

Canada and Mexico share many of the same concerns. Indeed, on many issues we have common interests and similar visions for the future of this hemisphere.

We share a commitment to combat the drug crisis - both the epidemic of abuse and the odious tentacles of production.

We share a recognition of the environmental threat to our own countries, to the region and to the world as a whole. We believe greater co-operation is possible between us to improve the environment of North America and beyond.

We share a commitment to stability and openness in the multilateral trading system. We both seek a successful and early conclusion to the Uruguay Round of trade talks. I am pleased that Mexico will host the next Ministerial meeting in April of this year which my colleague, the Honourable John Crosbie, Minister of International Trade, will attend.

Finally, as I have noted, we share a commitment to expand our own bilateral trade and economic relationship. I am confident that our discussions today and tomorrow will strengthen those linkages considerably.

Mr. Secretary, our meetings in Ottawa are significant in and of themselves. But they are also laying a firm foundation for the visit to Mexico of Prime Minister Mulroney on March 15 to 18. This will be the first visit by the Prime Minister to Latin America since Canada joined the OAS. It is significant that Mexico is the destination we have chosen to initiate the building of a new and expanded partnership with Latin America. I am confident that the Prime Minister's visit will be a great success and will set the course for a new and exciting phase in the relationship between our two countries.

Ladies and gentlemen, dedicated to a future of ever closer partnership between the peoples of Canada and Mexico, let us stand and raise our glasses to President Carlos Salinas de Gortari and Queen Elizabeth the Second.