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FIRST CANADA-MEXICO MINISTERIAL MEETING,  
OTTAWA, OCTOBER 21-22, 1971,  
JOINT COMMUNIQUE

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DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES EXTÉRIEURES

The first meeting of the Canada-Mexico Ministerial Committee was held in Ottawa, Canada, on October 21-22, 1971. The meeting marked the opening of a new phase in relations between the two countries. It revealed a wide range of common interests and identified new opportunities for co-operation between Mexico and Canada.

Mexico was represented by the Honourable Emilio O. Rabasa, Minister of Foreign Affairs; the Honourable Carlos Torres Manzo, Minister of Industry and Commerce; Mr. Agustin Olachea Borbon, Chief of the Department of Tourism; Mr. Julio Faesler, Director-General of the Institute of Foreign Trade; and Mr. Rafael Urdaneta, Ambassador of Mexico to Canada.

Canadian was represented by the Honourable Mitchell Sharp, Secretary of State for External Affairs; the Honourable Jean-Luc Pepin, Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce; Mr. Bruce Howard, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce; and Mr. S.F. Rae, Canadian Ambassador to Mexico.

The Canadian Ministers outlined the progress which has been made in implementing the announced Canadian policy towards Latin America. They explained that in the process of deepening and strengthening its links with Latin America, Canada believes that its relationship with Mexico is of special significance. The Canadian Ministers explained Canada's desire to be accredited to the Organization of American States as a Permanent Observer, Canada's intention of contributing as a full

member of the Pan American Health Organization, and Canada's interest in participating in other inter-American institutions.

The Canadian Ministers noted Canada's intention to enhance its participation in the social and economic development of Latin America. To this end a bilateral technical assistance programme for countries in Latin America has been launched. The Canadian Government has also taken the initiative to seek full membership in the Inter-American Development Bank. The Canadian Ministers reiterated their confidence in the Bank as a financial institution and as an appropriate means of channelling the major part of Canadian financial assistance to the area. It was noted that arrangements involving amendments to the Charter of the Bank had already been proposed to the members to make a Canadian application possible and Canadian Ministers expressed the hope that Mexico and the other members would take the steps necessary in the near future to provide for Canadian membership. The Canadian Ministers expressed the intention of the Canadian Government to contribute substantially, as a full member, to both the Bank's ordinary resources and its fund for special operations. Detailed discussions on these points are currently in progress.

The Mexican Ministers took note with satisfaction of the increasing activity of Canada in inter-American affairs and expressed their firm support for the Canadian intention of accrediting a Permanent Observer to the Council of the Organization of American States and of seeking full membership in the Inter-American Development Bank.

The Ministers exchanged views on the prospects for the Third United Nations Conference on Trade and Development which will be held in Santiago, Chile, in April, 1972. The Mexican Ministers stressed the importance they attach to the Conference as a means of advancing the interests of the developing countries. They expressed their particular interest in the early implementation by all the developed countries of the general preference scheme on which agreement in principle had been reached in New Delhi in 1968. The Canadian Ministers acknowledged the contribution that a general preference scheme could make to enlarging the market access of the developing countries for their products and reiterated Canada's intention to participate in it.

The Ministers examined the United States economic measures which have serious implications for both Canada and Mexico. While recognizing the importance to world trade of a strong and dynamic United States economy they expressed the hope that the period of uncertainty created by the United States measures would be of short duration. The Ministers noted, in particular, that the U.S. import surtax will adversely affect a substantial proportion of the exports of both countries, which are close neighbours of the United States, and that it could, if continued, impede further liberalization of world trade from which all countries stand to benefit. They stressed the need for the earliest possible removal of the surtax.

The Ministers noted that there had been a substantial increase in trade between the two countries but recognized that significant potential existed for still further expansion. In this

connection, they identified a range of specific opportunities that should be actively pursued, including the possibility of joint ventures between Mexican and Canadian firms, and agreed that a joint meeting of government and business leaders should be held in the near future to carry this work forward.

Ministers devoted special attention to ways and means of furthering the growth of commercial relations between the two countries, and decided to establish a working group of officials which would meet from time to time to examine in more detail particular trade issues such as harmonization of statistics, grading standards and transport facilities. They emphasized in particular the importance of making more active use of missions and trade fairs, and it was agreed that it was desirable to develop closer co-operation including the exchange of information on trade opportunities between the newly organized Mexican Institute of Foreign Trade and appropriate Canadian authorities.

Mexican Ministers expressed an interest in developing sales to Canada of a number of products, in particular fruits and vegetables. They also asked that consideration be given to providing improved access on a seasonal basis for such fruits and vegetables.

Canadian Ministers expressed Canada's interest in increased Canadian participation in Mexico's industrial growth, particularly in those sectors in which Canada has special expertise and capabilities. They outlined the insurance and financing facilities that could be made available to further such activities. Mexican Ministers identified certain sectors in which Canadian investment would be particularly welcome.

The Ministers emphasized their firm intention to intensify and to expand activities in the area of cultural, scientific and technological relations. Among the programs discussed and approved were:

1. The Mexican Delegation proposed a continuing programme of exchange of young technicians. The Canadian Delegation expressed a lively interest in the proposal and undertook to give it early and serious consideration. Canadian representatives will visit Mexico in the very near future to discuss this programme.
2. The Canadian Delegation announced that the Government of Canada was prepared to negotiate with the Government of Mexico a youth exchange under the programme "Contact Canada".
3. The two delegations agreed on the holding of cultural weeks (a Canada Week in Mexico and a Mexico Week in Canada), which would include lectures, film showings, exhibitions of books and plastic arts and concerts, beginning in 1972.
4. The Canadian Delegation announced the opening in December of this year of the Canadian Library Centre in Mexico City for the purpose of increasing knowledge in Mexico of Canadian economic, social, cultural, scientific, educational and political affairs.

The delegations agreed that there should be periodical meetings to discuss and review the development of these programmes. The first such meeting will be held shortly, the date and venue to be arranged through diplomatic channels.

As two of the top six travel destinations in the world, with incomes from visitors totalling more than \$1.2 billion a year, Mexico and Canada have agreed to continue their active interchange of technical information and experts in the fields of tourist development and promotion. Both sides expressed a keen interest in increasing the flow of visitors between the two countries and examined ways in which this could be accelerated. Agreement was reached on action programmes to give substantial encouragement to the campaign endorsed by the International Union of Official Travel Organizations and the Organization of American States to make 1972 "Tourism Year for the Americas" in order to increase travel to and within the Western Hemisphere.

It was agreed that every possible assistance should be given to consular officers of either country to enable them to perform their functions and, in particular, to assist their nationals in case of need. Specific steps in this direction will be developed through further contacts between Canadian and Mexican officials.

The Ministers agreed that their meeting had proved useful in providing a forum for the exchange of views between the two sides in matters of mutual interest and a stimulus to increased understanding and friendship between Mexico and Canada. The Canadian Ministers gratefully accepted the invitation of their Mexican colleagues to hold the next meeting in Mexico City on a date to be determined through future consultation.

The Canadian Ministers, on behalf of the Prime Minister, renewed an invitation to the President of Mexico to visit Canada.