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APPOINTMENT OF MR. LOUIS RASMINSKY AS CHAIRMAN OF THE
BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
RESEARCH CENTRE

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES EXTÉRIEURES

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Mitchell Sharp, today announced the appointment of Louis Rasminsky as Chairman of the Board of Governors of the International Development Research Centre.

Mr. Rasminsky, who is 65, retired in February from the post of Governor of the Bank of Canada which he had held for 12 years. In all, he spent 32 years as an official of the Central Bank.

As IDRC Chairman he succeeds the late Lester Pearson, who when Prime Minister played a leading role in the conception of this research centre and then when the Centre was established in 1970 became its first Chairman until his death last December.

The Centre was created by Act of the Canadian Parliament to support research designed to adapt science and technology to the specific needs of the developing regions of the world as determined by them. Mr. Sharp, when moving the IDRC legislation, pointed out to the Commons that the gap between the low income and the wealthier nations of the world was "to a large extent a science and technology gap", and virtually all of the world's expenditure on research and development was being made in the industrialised countries and for their primary benefit.

In 2½ years of operation the IDRC has approved support for 99 projects involving grants totalling \$13.4 million. Research support has been concentrated upon agriculture and forestry in the semi-arid tropical countries, upon population questions and rural health care, and upon certain areas of the social sciences and information sciences. Nearly all the research is being carried out in developing countries and by research workers of those regions.

The Act established the Centre as a public corporation, and provided that its Board of 21 Governors would be appointed by the Canadian Government. It also provides that the IDRC Chairman submit an annual report of the Centre's activities to a Minister--at present the Secretary of State for External Affairs--and he in turn lays the report before parliament.

Under the Act eleven of the IDRC Governors, including the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, have to be Canadian citizens. On the Centre's first Board (1970-72) 6 of the 10 non-Canadian Governors were from developing countries.

Mr. Rasminsky's career has been linked to international institutions for more than 40 years. After graduating with honours in economics from the University of Toronto at the age of 20, and after winning a fellowship for postgraduate work at the London School of Economics, he worked for nearly 10 years in various sections of the League of Nations organization.

In 1968 as Governor of the Bank of Canada he played an important part in the International Monetary Fund discussions which led to the establishment of Special Drawing Rights upon the Fund. Later he was deeply involved in the international negotiations that ended with the Smithsonian Agreement which ended the monetary crisis of 1970.

Born in 1908 in Montreal to parents who emigrated to Canada from Poland, Mr. Rasminsky moved with his family to Toronto as a child and was educated there. He is married to the former Lyla Rotenberg of Toronto, and they have two children.