

Statement

Secretary of
State for
External Affairs



Déclaration

Secrétaire d'État
aux Affaires
extérieures

92/48

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

**NOTES FOR AN ADDRESS BY
THE HONOURABLE BARBARA McDOUGALL,
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,
TO THE
OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE
CANADIAN FOREIGN SERVICE INSTITUTE**

**OTTAWA, Ontario
October 1, 1992**

Affaires extérieures et
Commerce extérieur Canada

External Affairs and
International Trade Canada

Canada

It is a pleasure for me to welcome you today to the inauguration of the Canadian Foreign Service Institute. My colleagues, the Honourable Michael Wilson and the Honourable Monique Landry, have asked me to add their good wishes to my own on this occasion.

I am also pleased to welcome Peter Harder, Associate Deputy Minister of Employment and Immigration Canada, here today representing my colleague the Honourable Bernard Valcourt, along with so many employees of the Department and of Employment and Immigration Canada. The Canadian Foreign Service Institute is very much your institute as well, here to respond to your needs.

The Canadian Foreign Service Institute will most certainly be a timely and important new resource for this Department and for Canada.

The international environment is evolving at tremendous speed and global interdependence is sharply on the rise. New international mechanisms for co-operation are being created, while many existing institutions are being forced to reorder their priorities. New nations are being born -- and in some cases reborn -- while many established nations are finding unique ways to co-operate on many levels.

It is a fundamental challenge for Canada to keep abreast of these evolving institutions, relationships and international mechanisms to ensure that our voice is heard and that the interests of Canadians are protected.

The challenges to our foreign service are therefore increasingly diverse and complex. Traditional tasks have become more complicated as new countries, new blocs and new relationships emerge.

Mass movements of populations, including political and economic refugees, have changed forever the way our immigration officers work. Environmental concerns have spawned a new range of political and trade issues, and the continuing struggle to ensure respect for human rights requires continued vigilance as old walls come down, and new ones spring up. In areas of instability, consular resources will continue to be tested to the limit to protect the welfare of Canadians abroad.

Our missions abroad, whether in other capitals or accredited to multilateral bodies, are an essential network for dialogue between Canada and other countries. But they can only be as effective as the people who serve in them and the network of people who support them. We must ensure that our staff in the field, as well as those here in Canada are up-to-date, well-trained and motivated. The work they do is crucial to the well-being and long-term security of all Canadians.

Even the tools with which we work today are changing. Advances in computer and communications technology have changed not only how we work but the nature of the work itself.

Training, at the entry-level and at every step of the way throughout an employee's career, is essential more than ever before. Canada's representatives abroad and our staff in Canada must have the "state-of-the-art" skills necessary to promote our nation's interests. This institute is a tangible example of this government's commitment, under the Public Service 2000 initiative, to a culture of continuous learning and service.

Other countries, too, devote significant resources to foreign service training. There are now over 40 national diplomatic institutes abroad. I look forward to the day when foreign service personnel from other countries will have the opportunity to learn from our Canadian Foreign Service Institute the values, the vision, and the special skills that Canadians bring to the resolution of international issues.

The Institute is not a closed shop. It will provide training appropriate to each and every employee in this Department. This training will also be of interest to other government departments that post employees abroad. The Institute will deliver its courses by bringing together the most effective teachers and teaching methods with the most skilled of our own practitioners.

There are many people who have worked very hard to make the Institute a reality, and I thank you all most sincerely.

There are many others who are looking forward to being the beneficiaries of the Institute's courses, none more so than those here with us this afternoon who will begin the first cycle of new courses starting tomorrow at the Institute's temporary quarters in the Asticou building in Hull. Please join with me in wishing them success in their studies.

Let us also applaud the Institute staff and all those who have worked with them to bring us to this important moment in the Department's history and in the continuing development of Canada as a respected force in international affairs.

I hereby officially declare the Canadian Foreign Service Institute open.