

PRESS RELEASE



COMMUNIQUÉ

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

CANADA

MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES EXTÉRIEURES

NO. 26(a)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APRIL 21, 1969

CANADA-JAPAN MINISTERIAL MEETING

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Mitchell Sharp, made the following statement in the House of Commons today:

I should like to table the joint communiqué of the fifth meeting of the Canada-Japan Ministerial Committee and to report very briefly to the House on the very useful meetings which were held in Tokyo last week.

This Ministerial Committee is not a negotiating body but rather a means whereby Ministers from the two countries can from time to time exchange views on the full range of bilateral relations between Canada and Japan as well as on the international situation. The fact that Japan is Canada's third largest trading partner, now competing for second place, is in itself sufficient reason for periodic and high-level discussions between Canadian Ministers and their Japanese counterparts. The need for and the utility of these meetings is enhanced by the increasingly close cooperation between Canada and Japan in political and other fields, both bilaterally and in all the major international organizations to which we both belong. Most of all, however, the meetings form an important part of Canada's role as a Pacific as well as an Atlantic country and they also reflect the growing Canadian activities throughout the Pacific area.

I have taken part in three meetings of this Committee in different capacities and in my view the one just completed is the most useful to date, in large part due to the increasing easiness of discussions over a broad range of subjects. This is not to suggest that we found a complete identity of views with the Japanese. We did not, and where we differed, we both made clear where our differences lay. On bilateral matters, for example, as you will see from the communiqué, the Canadian Ministers spoke with some vigour about certain Japanese trade restrictions which are causing difficulties for some Canadian exports. But one advantage of these meetings is to enable Ministers to speak directly with their Japanese opposite numbers on matters which are of great concern to Canada.

In addition to expressing my satisfaction over the quality of the discussions, both formal and informal, which we held with our Japanese colleagues, I should like to express our thanks for the warm and generous hospitality offered by our hosts. We were able to visit certain areas outside the capital and to get some impression of the cultural and industrial aspects of Japan. We visited the site of Expo '70 at Osaka and saw the Canadian pavilion, its outward structure now almost completed, and the pavilions of British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec. The extent of Canadian participation in this world exhibition, and the fact that our visit coincided with a tour of Japan by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, are, I believe, further indications of the broadening and deepening of our relations. It is of interest that a special newspaper supplement marking the visit was issued on the day our meetings began. The relationship between Canada and Japan is, I am convinced, a relationship which contains great mutual benefits and which in itself makes some contribution to stability and economic development in Asia and the Pacific region.