State visits to the United Mexican States, to the Republic of Guatemala, and to the Republic of Costa Rica by Their Excellencies The Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Governor General of Canada, and Mr. Jean-Daniel Lafond

Delegation

December 6 to 9, 2009  December 9 to 12, 2009  December 12 to 15, 2009
Michaëlle Jean was born in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. She immigrated to Canada with her family in 1968, fleeing thedictatorial regime of the time. After studying comparativeliterature at the Université de Montréal, she taught Italianthrough its Department of Literature and Modern Languages.During her studies, Ms. Jean worked for eight years withQuebec shelters for battered women, while activelycontributing to the establishment of a network of emergencyshelters throughout Quebec and elsewhere in Canada. She laterventured into journalism and became a highly regardedjournalist and anchor of information programs at Radio-Canada television and CBC Newsworld. She is married to Jean-Daniel Lafond and they have a daughter, Marie-Éden. Sworn in onSeptember 27, 2005, the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, 27th governor general sinceConfederation in 1867, represents the Queen in Canada and carries out the duties of headof State. As governor general, Her Excellency wants to create a space where, more than ever,dialogue prevails and the words of citizens are heard.
His Excellency Jean-Daniel Lafond

Born in France, Jean-Daniel Lafond taught philosophy and wrote film reviews for La Revue du Cinéma, while carrying out research in educational sciences and specializing in media pedagogy. He came to Canada in 1974, and became a Canadian citizen in 1981. He has since devoted his time to cinema, writing, radio and theatre. In 1985, he directed his first feature-length documentary, Dream Tracks, for the National Film Board (NFB). He has since written and directed more than a dozen films that embody his commitment to creative documentary filmmaking. His films have received numerous awards in Canada and abroad, including a prix Lumière in 1999. He was also appointed Companion of the Order of Canada in 2005. His most recent work includes Madwoman of God, a feature film inspired by the written work of Marie de l’Incarnation (1599-1672) and The Madness of Love. He is married to the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Governor General of Canada, and is actively involved in the responsibilities of the office. He has enthusiastically embarked on two ambitious projects while at Rideau Hall: Art Matters and the Citizen Voices Web site.
The Honourable Peter Kent  
Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas)

Peter Kent was first elected to the House of Commons in October 2008.

Prior to his election, Mr. Kent was an award-winning broadcast journalist* having spent more than 40 years working as a writer, reporter, producer, anchor and senior executive in Canada, the United States and around the world.

Internationally, he covered stories that shaped the 20th century, including such momentous events as the Vietnam and Yom Kippur wars, the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War.

In his first term as a member of Parliament, Mr. Kent was appointed by Prime Minister Stephen Harper as minister of State of Foreign Affairs, with particular responsibility for the Americas. He brings a wealth of experience to the Americas assignment from his days working out of Miami as a correspondent with NBC News. His beat spanned an era when many countries of the region struggled to survive communism and narco-terrorism.

In his new capacity, Minister Kent is promoting Canada’s Americas Policy to bolster democracy, prosperity and security across the hemisphere. In this new capacity, he has worked with fellow ministers and officials of the Organization of American States to address the constitutional crisis in Honduras and the eventual re-admittance of Cuba to full OAS membership status.

Mr. Kent has a long record of community service. He was a member of the Ontario Cabinet of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, served on the boards of Honest Reporting Canada, ParticipACTION and The Accessible Channel, and is a member of the Canadian Parliamentary Coalition to Combat Anti-Semitism. He has also served as a mentor with the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council and remains an active supporter of the Toronto Conservatory of Music, the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center, the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, and Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre.

*Awards and honours include Canadian Actra awards for reportage in Cambodia and Poland; Emmy nominations for his journalistic endeavours in South Africa, Mexico and Berlin; and the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Award in radio for his 1991 series on the challenges faced by Black Americans in U.S. inner cities. Mr. Kent is a member of the Canadian Broadcast Hall of Fame.
Guillermo E. Rishchynski
Ambassador of Canada to the United Mexican States

Guillermo E. Rishchynski was appointed as Canada’s ambassador to the United Mexican States in September 2007.

Ambassador Rishchynski joined the Canadian Foreign Service in 1982, after a career in the private sector in marketing and project management in Africa and Latin America. He has served at the Canadian consulates general in Rio de Janeiro and in Sao Paulo, Brazil (1983-1986); the Canadian Embassy in Amman, Jordan (1986-1989); the Canadian Consulate in Melbourne, Australia (1992-1993); the Canadian Embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia (1993-1996); and the Canadian Consulate General in Chicago, Illinois, USA (1997-1999). In 1999, he was appointed Canadian ambassador to Colombia, serving for three years in Bogota before returning to Canada. From 2003 to 2005, he served as vice-president for the Americas at the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) in Canada. From August 2005 to August 2007, he served as Canadian ambassador to the Federative Republic of Brazil.

At the headquarters of the Department of Foreign Affairs in Ottawa, he has held a number of senior positions, including those of deputy director, Mexico, Latin America and Caribbean (1989-1992); and director of the Team Canada Task Force (1997-1998). From 2002 to 2003, he was the inspector general of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Ambassador Rishchynski was born in Toronto, Ontario, in 1953, and was raised in Panama and the United States before he returned to Canada to complete his university studies at McGill University, in Montréal, Quebec, where he obtained an Honours BA in political science in 1975. He has also undertaken graduate studies at Norman Patterson School of International Affairs, at Carleton University in Ottawa. He speaks English, Spanish, French and Portuguese fluently, and has participated as a speaker and panellist at numerous international conferences and fora.

Ambassador Rishchynski is married to Jeannette Portillo Tinoco, and they have two children: Giselle Marie and Anthony Joseph.
Leeann R. McKechnie
Ambassador of Canada to Guatemala and
High Commissioner of Canada to Belize

Ms. McKechnie was appointed as ambassador of Canada
to Guatemala and high commissioner of Canada to Belize
in 2009.

She attended the University of Waterloo, where she obtained her
BA (Honours) in political science and English literature
in 1988.

Her foreign service career has encompassed postings
to Canadian embassies, notably as first secretary and consul in
Moscow, Russia (1996-98), and as counsellor and head of aid in Lima, Peru (2001-04).

She has served in several leadership roles with the Canadian International Development Agency
(CIDA), including director of strategic planning (1999); senior program manager of
the Inter-American Program and Summit of the Americas Task Force (2000-01); director of
the World Bank Group (2004-05); and senior departmental assistant, Office of the Minister

Prior to her appointment as ambassador, Ms. McKechnie was the director of policy and planning for
the Secretariat for the Americas Strategy (2007-08), at Foreign Affairs and International Trade
Canada.

Ambassador McKechnie is fluent in English, French and Spanish.
Neil Reeder  
Ambassador of Canada to Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Honduras

Neil Reeder joined the Department of External Affairs and International Trade in 1981, and has served abroad at Canadian diplomatic missions in Rabat, Morocco, Washington D.C. and Hong Kong. He was high commissioner of Canada to Brunei Darussalam, from 1999 to 2002, and until August 2005, he served as deputy head of mission at the Canadian embassy in Mexico. He is currently Canadian Ambassador to Costa Rica, with concurrent accreditation to Nicaragua and Honduras.

In Ottawa, Mr. Reeder undertook assignments in the East Asia Division, the Francophone Africa Division, and the Caribbean and Central America Relations Division. He also served as public liaison officer in the Arms Control and Disarmament Division. From 1995 to 1997, he was a foreign policy analyst (Asia Pacific) in the Foreign Affairs and Defence Secretariat of the Privy Council Office, where he was awarded a Public Service Outstanding Achievement Award by the Clerk of the Privy Council in 1997.

From 1997 to 1999, he was director of the Media Relations Office. From 2005-2007, he was director general of the Communications Bureau.

Mr. Reeder was editor of Bout de papier, the Canadian Foreign Service magazine, from 1998 to 1999, and was editor of the Disarmament Bulletin, a publication of the Department of Foreign Affairs, from 1984 to 1987.

Mr. Reeder obtained his bachelor’s degree (High Honours) from the University of Saskatchewan in 1979, and subsequently his Bachelor of Journalism (Honours) degree from Carleton University in 1981. He is married to Irene Hansen-Reeder and they have three children.
Kim Perry Butler
Director General, North American General Affairs
Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada

Kim Perry Butler was appointed as director general of North America General Relations at Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, in November 2007.

Mr. Butler joined the federal government in 1986, and has held a variety of positions with increasing responsibilities, including those of senior advisor to the deputy minister of Industry; director general and federal co-chair of the Canada-Ontario Infrastructure Program; corporate comptroller and senior director of Financial Policy and Systems; and director of Revenue, Policy and Costs. From 2004 to October 2007, he served as consul general of Canada in Minneapolis.

Mr. Butler is a graduate of the Government of Canada's Accelerated Executive Development Program and has completed the Public Executive Program at Queen's University. He holds a Bachelor of Commerce (Honours) degree from the University of Ottawa.
James M. Lambert was born on July 25, 1957 in Vancouver, British Columbia. He received his BA (Honours) in Canadian history from Queen's University, in Kingston, Ontario in 1979. He subsequently completed his graduate studies at the Norman Patterson School of International Relations, Carleton University, in Ottawa, Ontario.

Mr. Lambert joined the Department of External Affairs and International Trade in 1982. He served abroad as consular/visa officer in Lagos, Nigeria (1982 - 83); second secretary and vice-consul in San José, Costa Rica (1984 - 1987); counsellor and consul of economic affairs in Tokyo, Japan (1991 - 95); and minister counsellor in Mexico City, Mexico (1999 - 2002). Mr Lambert was appointed ambassador of Canada to Guatemala and El Salvador in 2002, and assumed additional responsibilities as high commissioner to Belize in 2005.

In Ottawa, he undertook a variety of assignments, including those of officer in the Arms Control and Disarmament Division (1982); officer for the Cabinet Liaison Division (1983); officer in the Personnel Division (1983 - 84); Toronto Economic Summit officer for the Economic International Relations Division (1987 - 89) and senior coordinator for the Vancouver APEC Economic Leaders Meeting (1995 - 98).

Mr. Lambert served as deputy director responsible for Cuba and Central America, in the Caribbean and Central America Division, from 1998-1999. From August 2005 to September 2006, he was director general of the Public Diplomacy Bureau.

He was appointed as director general of the Latin America and Caribbean Bureau in August 2006.

He is a contributing author of the 1994 guide, Doing Business in Japan, edited by Jane Withey. His article, “Institution Building in the Pacific - Canada in APEC”, was featured in the summer 1997 issue of Pacific Affairs.

Official Delegation
STATE VISITS TO THE UNITED MEXICAN STATES, THE REPUBLIC OF GUATEMALA & THE REPUBLIC OF COSTA RICA - DECEMBER 2009

Ronald Lemieux
Deputy Secretary to the Governor General

A career public servant, Mr. Lemieux has served in the federal government and at the House of Commons of Canada. He served as chief of protocol for the Parliament of Canada, and is currently chief of protocol at Rideau Hall. Mr. Lemieux also spent two years on assignment to the Parliamentary Centre, a non-governmental organization involved in international parliamentary development.
Robert Peck  
Chief of Protocol to Canada  
Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada

Mr. Peck is a graduate of Concordia University, in Montréal. After joining the Canadian Foreign Service in 1982, Mr. Peck served in Ottawa as well as at the Canadian High Commission in Lagos, Nigeria, and at the Canadian Embassy in Berne, Switzerland.

While at the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada (DFAIT) headquarters, Mr. Peck worked in corporate management, personnel, and the Media Relations Office. From 1993 to 1995, Mr. Peck served as press secretary and departmental spokesperson to two ministers of Foreign Affairs, before being posted to the Canadian Embassy in Athens, Greece, from 1994 to 1997.

Mr. Peck was director of the Media Relations Office at DFAIT from 1999 to 2000. During a leave of absence from 2000 to 2002, Mr. Peck was director of corporate affairs and investor relations at aerospace leader CAE Inc., in Montréal. Upon his return to DFAIT, he was named director of the West and Central Africa Division, a position he held until 2004. Mr. Peck served as Canada's ambassador to the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria from 2004 to 2007, after which he was named Chief of Protocol of Canada.
Rick Craig
Executive Director
Justice Education Society (JES)

Rick Craig is executive director of the Justice Education Society (JES) of British Columbia, an organization that educates British Columbians on the law and their justice system. He has been involved in public legal education for 30 years. During that time, he has authored many teaching resources, including a textbook on law and government for secondary students.

Over the past 20 years, the JES has organized justice education programs and provided access to Canadian courts for over one million British Columbians. The Society develops curricula and organizes professional development for teachers and community workers in a variety of subjects: parenting after separation; public legal education for immigrants; specialized law-related education for youth at risk, Aboriginal youth and Aboriginal communities; and self-help resources for unrepresented litigants. More information on the Society’s programs and resources is available at www.justiceeducation.ca.

Mr. Craig has worked over 35 years at the international level in promoting human rights, capacity building and good governance as it relates to the justice sector. He has worked in Chile, Peru, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, South Africa, Ethiopia, Somalia, China, the Philippines and Bangladesh. He has been a founder of several community human rights organizations and one international development NGO: Co-Development Canada. He also founded the Justice Education Society.

Over the past 10 years, Mr. Craig has worked on justice system strengthening programs for Central America. These programs involve capacity building for Guatemalan prosecutors, police and judges in the areas of criminal justice. This involves training on processing murder scenes, major case management, investigations and oral trials, which are now being implemented in El Salvador and Honduras. Mr. Craig has also worked with the government of Mexico to strengthen its justice system, and with Aboriginal communities in Guatemala to examine Aboriginal justice issues.
Youssef El-Khoury
Filmmaker and Executive Assistant, Dialogue New Brunswick

Youssef El-Khoury is a New Brunswicker of French-Canadian/Lebanese descent. He has completed a Bachelor’s in Leadership from the University of New Brunswick and received a Film Diploma from the Vancouver Film School.

He is currently the executive assistant of Dialogue New Brunswick (www.dialoguenb.org), a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote closer ties between the Francophone and Anglophone communities in New Brunswick.

He has worked in every capacity in the filmmaking process, but has found his passion in directing, producing and writing. His most recent completed project was a short documentary called Ssstutter which can be found on YouTube.

In 2004, he was fortunate enough to be selected as one of the original 21 Leaders for the 21st Century (www.21inc.ca). The aim of this unique New Brunswick initiative is to recognize young leaders and provide them with opportunities to network with other young leaders and influential individuals in cultural, business, government, and non-profit sectors.

Furthermore, he was recently chosen as one of 25 young Canadians to take part in the Order of Canada Mentorship Program (www.citizenvoices.gq.ca) and was thrilled to find out that he was matched with His Excellency Jean-Daniel Lafond, a noted filmmaker.
Carlos Ferrand
Screenwriter, Film Director and Director of Photography

Born in Lima, Peru, Carlos Ferrand now lives with his family in Montréal, Quebec. A graduate of the Institut national d’études cinématographiques (INSAS) in Brussels, he has worked as a director, screenwriter and cinematographer since 1970.

His films include Cimarrones (1982), a fictional film about African-descended slaves in Peru; Cuervo (1989), a fictional feature film made in Cuba about the reunion of twin sisters in the rainforest; and Visionaries (1989), a documentary dedicated to his daughter, Beatriz, in which Ferrand recounts his voyage of discovery to find, through creation, the meaning of life. In 2002, Ferrand directed and filmed the documentary, The Man who Talks with Wolves, which tells of the enchanted world of Louise and Michel Pageau, two remarkable individuals who devote their lives to caring for and freeing wild animals in northern Quebec. In 2005, he directed The Magic Touch, an exuberant film about an extraordinary artist, Dominique Lemieux, the designer of many of the Cirque du Soleil costumes. In 2007, Ferrand filmed Americano, a personal journey from Patagonia to the Arctic.
Nicodemus Illauq
Deputy Mayor, Municipality of Clyde River, Nunavut
Jaime Koebel grew up in Craigend and Lac La Biche, Alberta. From the age of 15, and for nine years after, Ms. Koebel was a vocal youth advocate with the National Association of Friendship Centres. For three years after that, she was co-chair for the Urban Multi-purpose Aboriginal Youth Centres Initiative, before receiving a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Carleton University, in Canadian Studies.

During this time, Ms. Koebel was appointed as an advisor to the Secretary of State for Multiculturalism and Status of Women through the Department of Canadian Heritage, from 1999-2002. In 2003-2004, Ms. Koebel was an advisor to the Minister for the Department of Canadian Heritage, for the Traditional Knowledge Gatherings. In 2004-2005, Ms. Koebel was named one of the National Aboriginal Health Organization’s National Aboriginal Role Models; she continues to be an active spokesperson for this organization.

As a successful visual artist, Ms. Koebel’s works have been showcased worldwide and have been held in many prestigious private and public galleries. Her art reflects her perspective and dreams of the intangible nature of the world around her, including plants and plant life from her indigenous heritage. Ms. Koebel is a dancer with the well-known troupe, Jig On The Fly, and has won many individual dance competitions in Canada and the United States.

Currently, Ms. Koebel is also a research and development officer with the Métis Settlements of Alberta, at their satellite office in Ottawa, as well as a national board member for the Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada and co-chair for Carleton University’s Aboriginal Task Force. Ms. Koebel lives in Ottawa with her partner, Jeffrey Cyr, and six children.

A native of Chile, Professor Andrea Martinez is the director of the University of Ottawa’s School of International Development and Global Studies. She has published numerous articles and chapters of books on the fight against poverty, and on violence and other forms of hardship faced by marginalized women (Afro-descendent and Indigenous women, refugees, teen mothers, HIV-positive women, and victims of international trafficking). More recently, her involvement in the field of sexual and reproductive rights has led her to forge ties with university partners, Aboriginal women’s groups and NGOs in Latin America, with a view to promoting equity and social justice. From 2001 to 2004, she was the first coordinator of the College of the Americas’ (COLAM) Inter-American Training Network on Women and Development, a university consortium that jointly offers academic programs and professional training on feminist topics of continental interest. In addition to her research activities and teaching to undergraduate and graduate students, she served for six years as director (2000-2006) of the Institute of Women’s Studies at the University of Ottawa. Over the course of her career, she has received grants from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the Canadian International Development Agency, the International Development Research Centre and UNESCO, among others.
Tom McSorley
Executive Director, Canadian Film Institute

Tom McSorley is executive director and director of programming at the Canadian Film Institute. He is also a sessional lecturer in Film Studies, at Carleton University; a freelance film and theatre critic for CBC Radio One; the editor of Rivers of Time: The Films of Philip Hoffman (2008); and co-editor of Self Portraits: The Cinemas of Canada Since Telefilm (2006) and Life Without Death: The Cinema of Frank Cole (2009). He is the author of numerous articles and book chapters on Canadian and international cinema, and the author of a new critical study on Atom Egoyan’s 1991 feature film, The Adjuster (2009). In 1997, McSorley created the annual Latin American Film Festival as a key component of the Canadian Film Institute’s ongoing international film programming in Canada’s capital.
Mario Renaud
Executive Director, Centre for International Studies and Co-operation (CECI)

With more than 35 years of experience in development co-operation, Mario Renaud is the new director general of the Centre for International Studies and Cooperation (CECI).

Mr. Renaud first worked as a volunteer, teaching in Mali and Madagascar with Solidarité, union et coopération (SUCO), from 1970 to 1974. Upon his return to Canada, he joined the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). Between 1974 and 1984, he was subsequently a program/project officer for Africa and Latin America, responsible for the preparation of CIDA’s cooperants overseas, and a human resource officer. From 1984 to 1991, he held the position of counsellor in development for Canada’s embassies in Peru and Indonesia.

He took a leave of absence without pay from CIDA from 1986 to 1988, to take on the position of CECI’s first regional director for the Andes program, based in Lima. From 1991 on to his retirement from CIDA in 2005, he has held such positions as director general for Management and Strategic Planning for Asia; director general for Human Resources; director general for North Africa and the Middle East; and then director general for Strategic Planning and Management for the Multilateral Institutions’ program.

Since 2005, Mr. Renaud has been involved with NGOs and as a consultant for the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF), as well as with CIDA. Mario Renaud is known for his initiatives to integrate social, economic and ecological issues in development processes.
Gavin Sheppard
Co-Founder and Executive Director, The Remix Project

Gavin Sheppard is the co-founder and executive director of The Remix Project. Since its inception in 2006, Remix has become an official priority project of the Mayor of Toronto’s “Making A Safe City Safer” advisory panel, and an award-winning partner of the UN-Habitat’s Safer Cities Programme. The Remix model highlights the impact of urban entertainment and culture as tools for engagement and empowerment, and introduces elements of hands-on training and mentorship into the mix.

Gavin is a founding member of the Grassroots Youth Collaborative, a board member of Schools Without Borders, and the chair of the Laidlaw Foundation’s Youth Organizing Committee. He has consulted with the Organization of American States, UN-Habitat, the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Ontario Arts Council. His speaking engagements have brought him to Harvard University, UN Headquarters and various international conferences, as well as in ghettos, slums, barrios and favelas around the world.