Statement by Ambassador Philip Mackinnon of Canada to the
Good Governance for Development (GfD) in the Arab Countries
Steering Group Meeting at the Ministerial Level
Delivered on 20 May 2006

- Canada provided an expert to co-chair the regulatory sub-group of working group 4, and has recently provided financial support to the GfD process through a grant to the OECD.

- Canada is prepared to examine and carefully consider the range of items put forward, and to provide financial and technical support where we have appropriate resources.

- Our first preference is toward supporting regional initiatives.

- Having just received the country action plans and working group outputs we have yet to examine them fully. Clearly the planning for some proposals is more advanced than for others.

- We note the identification by Working Group 5 (Judiciary and Enforcement of Judgements) of which countries share an interest in different projects. It would be useful if this were done with other working groups and across the various country action plans where appropriate.

- Significant additional planning work is required for projects involving external funding or regional collaboration.

- Other important initiatives are primarily internal administrative and policy changes within individual countries. Many of these can proceed without external support.

- Several regional centres have been proposed in different fields. While they may be potentially very valuable institutions, our key concerns include their sustainability and the number of countries that will actively participate in each one. These issues have to be addressed in their detailed planning.

- This GfD initiative has produced so many good results and plans of action that prioritisation of effort by both regional and OECD parties has become important.

- We see a continuing role for the UNDP and OECD, one likely extending past the currently envisaged next 18 months. This needs to be considered and addressed soon.

- Canada can provide support both directly to the initiative and through our bilateral programmes.