



DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES EXTÉRIEURES

communiqué

No.:
No.: 28

DIFFUSION:
RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APRIL 23, 1980

SIGNING OF AMENDING PROTOCOL TO THE CANADA-USA NUCLEAR CO-OPERATION AGREEMENT

Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mark MacGuigan, and the United States Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, signed today a Protocol amending the 1955 Agreement for Co-operation concerning Civil Uses of Atomic Energy between the Government of Canada and the Government of the United States of America.

Both Canada and the United States have been pioneers in the development of atomic energy for peaceful purposes. Both have also played an active role in international efforts to ensure that international nuclear commerce can take place with minimal risk of proliferation of nuclear explosive capability.

The two countries have engaged in mutually beneficial nuclear co-operation since the 1940s. The continuous evolution of nuclear technology and of the nuclear non-proliferation policies of governments has on several occasions required amendments to the co-operation agreement of 1955, which terminates on July 14, 1980. The Protocol would incorporate fully the current safeguards and other non-proliferation requirements of both Canada and the United States. The Protocol provides for safeguards undertakings to be verified by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in accordance with the respective agreements of the two countries with the IAEA. Also, by extending the life of the Agreement to January 1, 2000, it would permit on-going nuclear co-operation between the two countries. After a period for Congressional review of the Protocol in the USA, it may be brought into effect by the two Governments.

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* The text of the Protocol can be obtained by contacting the Press Office of the Department of External Affairs at (613) 995-1874, or by writing to that office at 125 Sussex Drive, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0G2.