

PREFACE

In the space of ten months the government of Canada hosted three major international summits: the **Sommet de la francophonie** in Quebec City, September 3 - 5, 1987; the **Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting** in Vancouver, October 13 - 17, 1987; and the **Economic Summit** in Toronto, June 19 - 21, 1988.

In order to organize these three major events, involving approximately 100 countries, the Department of External Affairs established one office, the **Summits Management Office (SMO)** in Ottawa, in September 1986. This concept of one office to organize all three prevented much duplication of effort, built experience and ensured the most efficient use of resources.

From the experienced staff of the Summits Management Office, Canada has been able to develop and maintain an inventory of persons with summits expertise across the range of associated disciplines. In February of 1990, Canada was able to organize, in record time, a fourth major international meeting, the **Open Skies Conference**, by calling on this inventory.

With the organizational success of all four events broadly acknowledged internationally, there have been requests made to the government of Canada by future hosts for advice on how to go about organizing a summit.

It was because of these requests that I, as a "retired" SMO staffer, was asked to undertake the preparation of this handbook on hosting summit meetings. I was asked to review the reports prepared by the organizers of the three summits and the Open Skies Conference, pull out the common elements of organizational detail and lessons learned, and put them into a simple format which future hosts could use in developing their own basic plans and approaches.

There are fifteen people whom I wish to acknowledge. These people were all part of the experienced team from the Summits Management Office, many of whom have continued to gain further expertise and credit in the field of "summit organization".

Len Edwards, the Executive Director for Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Vancouver and the Economic Summit in Toronto, was responsible for my writing this handbook in the first place. To him I owe a great deal of thanks for suggestions, advice, editing skills and friendship.