

The Department of External Affairs announces that Commonwealth Secretary-General Ramphal will arrive in Ottawa on Wednesday evening for a two-day visit which ends with his departure on Saturday morning.

Mr. Ramphal succeeded Mr. Arnold Smith as Commonwealth Secretary-General following a decade in politics during which he was actively involved in Caribbean, Commonwealth and international affairs. He is a Guyanese of Indian origin, and has a British wife.

Mr. Ramphal, who was guest speaker at a dinner concluding the Dalhousie Conference in Halifax last week, will be meeting with the Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Pierre Elliott Trudeau, the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, Government House Leader, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Don Jamieson, and the Speaker of the House, the Honourable J. Jerome. He will also meet with officials from the Department of External Affairs and the Canadian International Development Agency and will attend the Third Canadian Regional Parliamentary Seminar. Finally, Mr. Ramphal will address the Royal Commonwealth Society and attend a reception to be given by the Governor-General.

The Commonwealth Secretary-General will also hold a press conference at the National Press Auditorium on Thursday, November 4 at 9:30 a.m. and will give television and radio interviews.

Secretary-General Ramphal's visit is timely as the Commonwealth Secretariat has recently been granted observer status at the United Nations and the Secretary-General has also undertaken to provide assistance to the leaders of all Zimbabwe nationalist delegations invited to the Geneva Conference on Rhodesia. Mr. Ramphal's presence in Ottawa will offer representatives of the Government of Canada an opportunity to discuss the existing situation in Southern Africa, particularly since Mr. Ramphal has recently returned from a visit to several African countries. Among other major topics of discussion during the visit of the Commonwealth Secretary-General will be the arrangements for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting scheduled to take place in London, England next June.