

# News BRIEFS

## FIGHTING ILLICIT DRUGS IN THE HEMISPHERE

Canada has launched a dialogue among the Americas' foreign ministers to promote an integrated and effective approach to dealing with the problem of illicit drugs. The first step of that dialogue is a discussion paper released by Minister Axworthy during his recent trip to Cuba, Jamaica, Mexico and Nicaragua. The paper is a follow-up to the Summit of the Americas meeting in Santiago, Chile, last year, where national leaders called for greater co-operation in tackling this problem. Canada then offered to develop the paper and co-ordinate the dialogue.

Noting that the drug problem is closely linked to social and economic issues, the leaders had called for an integrated strategy, thus recognizing that illicit drugs are more than an enforcement problem; they are also a human security problem. In that light, Canada's discussion paper suggests greater support for health and education programs to reduce demand for drugs, more concerted efforts to develop alternative crops and economic opportunities, and an emphasis on curtailing the flow of small arms into the hands of drug barons.

Foreign ministers are expected to meet to discuss a drug strategy on the margins of this year's June meeting of the Organization of American States (OAS) in Guatemala.

## NUCLEAR TEST-BAN TREATY

Canada was among the first countries to ratify, on December 18, the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). The Treaty recognizes that halting all nuclear weapons test explosions, and all other nuclear explosions, constitutes an effective measure of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. It is considered effective because it constrains the development and improvement of nuclear weapons.

A major feature of the CTBT is the Treaty's International Monitoring System (IMS), a global net-

work of 321 monitoring stations and 16 laboratories that will continuously measure shock waves in air, water and rock, as well as changes in atmospheric radioactivity. The IMS will be capable of detecting any nuclear explosion in the atmosphere, underwater or underground, anywhere on earth. Each monitoring station will continuously transmit data back to the International Data Centre in Vienna for collation, analysis and interpretation.

Canada's contribution to the Treaty includes the establishment of a National Authority, which will report to the IMS, and the provision of 15 stations, including seismic, radionuclide, infrasound and hydroacoustic stations, and one radionuclide laboratory.

In addition, Canada will play a key role in organizing a Conference of States for the fall of 1999 to explore ways of facilitating the Treaty's early entry into force.

## LANDMINES

Only one year ago, on December 3-4, 1997, 2,400 representatives from 122 countries gathered in Ottawa to sign a historic treaty banning the production, stockpiling, use and export of anti-personnel landmines. Since then, the momentum behind the landmines campaign has continued to grow. The Ottawa Convention has now been ratified by some 55 countries, making it the most rapidly ratified multilateral treaty in history. A total of 133 countries have now signed the convention, which will become international law on March 1, 1999.

So far, over 11-million stockpiled mines in 15 countries were to have been destroyed by the end of 1998. Canada is leading the way in assisting a number of countries to get rid of their landmines. In November, Foreign Minister Axworthy and Minister for International Co-operation Diane Marleau announced that Canada will contribute \$1 million to an International Trust Fund for landmine removal and assistance to mine victims in the former Yugoslavia. The donation goes to the International Trust Fund for De-mining and for the Assistance of Mine Victims in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The contribution is part of \$10 million that the Government has earmarked for mine action in Bosnia from its five-year \$100-million Canadian Landmine Fund.



In December, upon the first anniversary of the adoption of the Convention to ban landmines, the Ministers announced a further contribution of \$2.8 million for mine-action projects in seven countries in Central Europe, Africa and the Middle East. Minister Axworthy took advantage of the occasion to present the report *One Year Later: Is the Ottawa*

*Convention Making a Difference?*, which chronicles the global progress in the fight against anti-personnel mines in the year since the Convention opened for signature.

For information on Canada's mine actions or to find out how you can help, visit our Web site at [www.mines.gc.ca](http://www.mines.gc.ca)

## ANTI-BRIBERY LEGISLATION

On December 17, Canada became the fifth country to ratify the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions, thus ensuring that the Convention will enter into force on February 15, 1999. Canada's ratification of the Convention follows rapid and unanimous approval in Parliament of the Corruption of Foreign Public Officials Act, which creates the new offence of bribery of foreign public officials in the course of business. The offence carries a maximum penalty of five years' imprisonment and qualifies as an extraditable offence.

The Convention will permit OECD and other countries to move in a co-ordinated manner to adopt national legislation making it a crime to bribe foreign public officials. The Convention requires countries to impose dissuasive sanctions and commits them to providing mutual legal assistance.

The 29-member OECD, which includes Canada, the United States, most European countries, Japan and South Korea, is the major economic policy forum for the world's most advanced industrialized democracies.

## NEW PUBLICATIONS

The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade has produced two new brochures. *Serving Canadians around the World* is aimed at informing and educating both Canadians and non-Canadians about the Department's people, mandate and activities. The *Lester B. Pearson Building: Where Canada Meets the World* provides a detailed description of the building that has been the Department's headquarters since August 1973. It outlines the history of the Department's search for a permanent home and describes the building's features and services.

Both brochures are available from the Enquiries Service (944-4000 in the National Capital Region or toll free at 1-800-267-8376). They can also be ordered by fax at 1-613-996-9709.

## OCTOBER

### OCTOBER 6-8

International Conference on Federalism

Mont Tremblant, Quebec

Sponsored by the Committee for a Forum of Federations, the conference will bring together elected and private-sector representatives, civil servants and academics from a large number of federal countries to focus on the challenges posed by the management of federal systems. The goal is to offer policy makers and practitioners of federalism an arena in which to exchange information and compare experiences in order to improve the practice of federalism.

Web site: [www.ciff.on.ca](http://www.ciff.on.ca)

## NOVEMBER

### NOVEMBER 12-15

Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) South Africa

The meeting will deal with issues of interest to all Commonwealth member countries and select the next Commonwealth Secretary-General who will succeed Chief Emeka Anyaoku, whose second term of office expires on December 31, 1999. ●

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