

From: Dalhousie University
Halifax, N.S. Canada

PRESS RELEASE

THE DALHOUSIE CONFERENCE:

THE COMMONWEALTH AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

Dalhousie University is holding a Conference on the Commonwealth and Non-Governmental Organisations from 25 to 29 October, 1976. Fifty-five participants will be present from all parts of the Commonwealth, i.e. Africa, South Asia, South Pacific, the West Indies, the United Kingdom and the Mediterranean.

The Commonwealth is now recognised as a multi-racial and multi-cultural association which has an important contribution to make in fields which affect the quality of life of its peoples. The contribution can only be fully exploited if the peoples, as well as the governments, of the Commonwealth are involved. It is here that Commonwealth non-governmental organisations have a crucial role in providing a link between governments and peoples. The conference organised by Dalhousie University will consider the relationship between Commonwealth governments and NGOs, and between the Commonwealth Secretariat and NGOs. Up to now, a degree of informal contact has been possible; but there are divergent views on whether such contact should be formalised or continued on the present basis. The media's poor coverage of Commonwealth affairs is also due for attention. In any event, the participants will have ample opportunity to raise other related issues in the general context of the conference programme. They will examine the functions of the Commonwealth Secretariat and survey the first decade of its operations, discuss the range and scope of Commonwealth non-governmental organisations, including the special problems of such bodies