

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, announced today that Canada will participate in the conference to be held in Geneva, Switzerland, May 5-30, to review the provisions and operation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The Canadian Delegation to the Conference will be led by Ambassador W.H. Barton, Permanent Canadian Representative to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD), in Geneva, and will include officials of the Department of External Affairs, the Atomic Energy Control Board and Canada's Permanent Missions to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The Non-Proliferation Treaty was concluded in 1968 and came into force in March 1970. It has been ratified by 93 countries and signed by 17 others. The Treaty has been significantly strengthened with its ratification in recent days by five more of the European Economic Community countries (Federal Republic of Germany, Netherlands, Luxemburg, Belgium and Italy) and by the Republic of Korea.

Canada signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty in July 1968, ratified it in January 1969 and has been one of its strongest supporters. Canada regards the Treaty and its associated system of nuclear safeguards, applied by the International Atomic Energy Agency, as the basic instruments of the non-proliferation structure designed to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons to more countries.

Canada's general aim at the Conference will be to seek strong reaffirmation of the Treaty's objectives and provisions, and wider adherence to the Treaty. At the conference Canada will reaffirm its own commitment to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and its readiness, as a supplier of nuclear material and equipment, to share the benefits of nuclear energy provided it has adequate assurance that the assistance it provides will be used solely for peaceful non-explosive purposes.

Canada will also strongly reiterate its view that all states, particularly the nuclear weapon states, should negotiate in good faith toward the adoption of effective measures to achieve a halt to the nuclear arms race at an early date, a reduction in nuclear arms and a ban on nuclear weapon tests in all environments.