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# news release

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## QUELLET SIGNS AGREEMENT ESTABLISHING MONTREAL HEADQUARTERS FOR NORTH AMERICAN COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL CO-OPERATION

Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet today signed, in Montreal, the Headquarters Agreement between the Government of Canada and the North American Commission for Environmental Co-operation, establishing the Commission's Secretariat in Montreal.

"Montreal has a well-earned reputation as an international city. The establishment of the Commission's headquarters there is further proof that Montreal's world-class amenities are recognized and respected not just in Canada, but around the world," said Mr. Ouellet.

The Commission is the international organization established under the North American Agreement for Environmental Co-operation signed by Canada, Mexico and the United States last year. It comprises a ministerial-level Council, the central Secretariat and a Joint Public Advisory Committee.

The Headquarters Agreement provides the legal basis for establishing the Environmental Commission as a legal entity under Canadian law.

The Agreement was also signed by the executive director of the Secretariat, Victor Lichtinger, at the signing ceremony in Montreal. The Secretariat, which will have a full-time staff of about 30 people from the three North American Free Trade Agreement countries, is responsible for carrying out the work of the Commission.

The Environmental Commission will promote sustainable development, increase environmental co-operation and enhance compliance with domestic environmental laws and regulations in North America. The Headquarters Agreement marks another important step in enabling the Commission to begin its work toward achieving these goals.

- 30 -

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