

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Mitchell Sharp, and the Minister of Communications, the Honourable Robert Stanbury, announce that today in Washington, Canada signed new agreements respecting the International Telecommunications Satellite Organization (INTELSAT). Deputy Minister of Communications Allan E. Gotlieb signed the inter-governmental agreement defining the permanent new structure of INTELSAT and laying down the basic principles by which countries wishing to be associated with the establishment and development of a worldwide commercial telecommunications satellite system are to abide. The operating agreement was signed by Mr. Jean-Claude Delorme, President and General Manager of the Canadian Overseas Telecommunications Corporation; under its terms, the operating companies designated for the purpose by their respective governments undertake to share in the financing, management and use of the INTELSAT system.

These two new agreements replace the interim arrangements arrived at in 1964 by the organization's ten founding members, of which Canada was one. The present membership is seventy-nine, forty of them receiving telephone, telex, data-transmission and, occasionally, television service from INTELSAT satellites in synchronous orbit over the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian oceans. Plans are for fifty-four countries to be using the system by the end of 1972, and sixty-two by the end of 1973. Under the new arrangements, the American Comsat Corporation will continue to be responsible for the technical aspects of management over an interim period of six years, after which an international manager will assume this function.

The Canadian Overseas Telecommunications Corporation has been using the Atlantic Ocean segment of the INTELSAT system since October 1966. Through its two earth stations at Mill Village, N.S., the Corporation has established links with nineteen countries in that part of the world. Facilities now being built at Lake Cowichan, B.C. will become operational in 1972, and will then provide direct links with countries on the Pacific rim. The COTC is the fifth largest user of the INTELSAT system.