

# News BRIEFS

## PHILIPPE KIRSCH RECEIVES ROBERT S. LITVACK HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD

DFAIT legal advisor Philippe Kirsch received the Robert S. Litvack Award on January 28 for his outstanding contribution to the cause of peace and human rights. He shared the award with Benjamin B. Ferencz, the former chief prosecutor for the United States before the Nuremberg war crimes tribunal. The award is presented annually by McGill University in Montréal and InterAmicus, an international human rights advocacy centre based at McGill.

The Robert S. Litvack Award was instituted in 1987 in memory of a tireless defender of Aboriginal rights.



Philippe Kirsch and Benjamin B. Ferencz

Since joining DFAIT in 1972, Mr. Kirsch has worked unceasingly within the United Nations system to help promote humanitarian values in international law. He chaired the Committee of the Whole of the Rome Conference, which adopted the statute of the International Criminal Court on July 17, 1998 — considered a revolutionary development in international law. The Court will come into existence once 60 states have ratified the treaty. In February 1999, Mr. Kirsch was elected chair of the preparatory commission established to develop the instruments necessary for the proper operation of the Court.

## Human Rights Highlights

**1** For the Record 1998, a global human rights report produced by the non-governmental organization Human Rights Internet (HRI) in partnership with DFAIT, is now available on the Internet. This is the second annual edition of the publication, which guides the user through a vast array of UN human rights documentation conveniently

arranged by country and theme. A print version of the document can be obtained through Human Rights Internet. The electronic version may be accessed at HRI's Web site:

**www.hri.ca/fortherecord1998**

- 2** The situation in Rwanda; renewal of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on freedom of opinion and expression; impunity; violence against women; the Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples — these are some of the main issues Canada was planning to raise at this year's session of the UN Commission on Human Rights, meeting in Geneva from March 22 to April 30. Canada also intended to co-sponsor a resolution on freedom of religion.
- 3** At a meeting with NGOs in Ottawa in early March, Foreign Minister Axworthy indicated that Canada would be making a particular effort to integrate human rights concerns into its work on the UN Security Council. On February 12, the Minister presided over a Canadian-initiated Council discussion on the issue of the protection of civilians in armed conflict. The Security Council agreed to hold further discussions on how the UN might play a more proactive role in addressing this problem.

## New Embassies

**Berlin** — Construction of a new Canadian Embassy in Berlin, Germany, will begin in the fall of 1999, with completion expected in 2001. The winning architectural team, selected by a panel of distinguished Canadian and German architects, is: Kuwabara Payne McKenna Blumberg Architects / Architectes Gagnon, Letellier, Cyr /

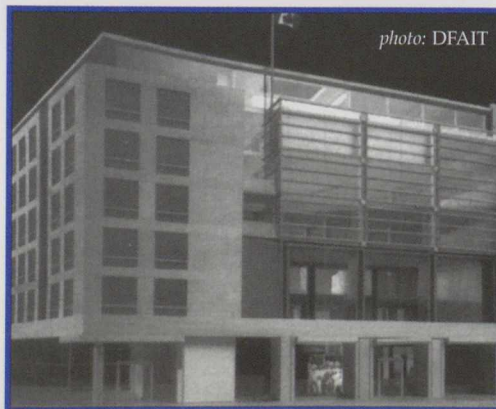


photo: DFAIT

Smith Carter Architects & Engineers Inc., in joint venture with Vogel Architect, Consulting Architect.

The need for a new Embassy in Berlin stems from Germany's decision, following its reunification, to reinstate Berlin as the seat of government. The move will occur in the fall of 1999. Consequently, in the summer of 1999, most of Canada's present Embassy operations in Bonn will be transferred to Berlin, where we will occupy temporary facilities.

The new Canadian Embassy will be located at the historic junction of Leipziger Platz and Potsdamer Platz in the heart of Berlin. To learn more about the design and other details, visit DFAIT's Web site at **www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca**, click on "Publications" and go to "News Releases."

**Abu Dhabi** — International Trade Minister Sergio Marchi officially opened the new Canadian Chancery in Abu Dhabi on February 24, during a seven-day business development mission to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, Israel, and Gaza and the West Bank. The Emirates represent the fastest-growing market for Canadians in the Middle East. In 1998, Canadian exports to the UAE reached an estimated \$270 million, increasing almost fivefold over the past six years.

## Grant to Université Laval

On February 25, Minister Axworthy announced a \$250 000 grant to the Institut québécois des hautes études internationales of the Université Laval to support its graduate program in international relations. The grant will allow for the establishment of a three-year partnership between DFAIT and the Institut. Students and researchers will come to DFAIT to participate in educational forums on a host of international topics, and departmental officials will go to the Institut to lecture on their areas of expertise.

The Institut québécois des hautes études internationales is the only such body in Canada to offer a French-language multidisciplinary graduate program in international relations.

• cont'd on page **16**