

## REPORT FROM THE ROUNDTABLE ON BURMA AND DRUGS

May 15, 2000

Vancouver, British Columbia

*A roundtable organized by the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development in partnership with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (Southeast Asia Division and the International Crime Division) and Simon Fraser University was held in Vancouver, BC on May 15, 2000, to discuss Burma and the Drug Trade. The Honorable Raymond Chan, Secretary of State for Asia-Pacific, presented opening remarks to a gathering of international and Canadian experts.*

*Political scientists, law enforcement officers, a social planning expert, federal government officials, Canadian journalists, international journalists living in Bangkok, development and human rights NGOs, lawyers, specialists in human security, representatives of the Burmese government in exile, democratic development activists and those with United Nations experience in Burma met for a one day session at Simon Fraser University. The roundtable is the third in a series of roundtables on Burma.*

*The purpose of the roundtable was to focus on Burma as a source of drugs and the impact of drugs on human security in both Canada and Southeast Asia, the political and economic situation in Burma, regional stability and security in Southeast Asia, the control of drugs and possible roles that Canada might play. The following report is a summary of the key themes discussed at the Burma and Drugs Roundtable.*

### OVERVIEW:

**"Foreign policy is merely domestic policy with its hat on" Lester Pearson**

Burma, amid growing isolation, rumours of cabinet changes and a weakened economy still resists and questions any reform or change in the country. Aung San Suu Kyi is increasingly isolated by the regime. The military cease fire is holding in the country because the control of drug production and profits are firmly in the hands of the military. Students and civil servants are unsettled and unrest is brewing, yet the regime remains confident they are in firm control.

Regionally, relations are deteriorating with Thailand, Bangladesh, China, India and Laos. The President of China feels very strongly about the drug trade and it's regional implications. The critical issues are drugs, money laundering and refugees – issues which could have long term