

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, announced today that the Commonwealth Secretary-General, His Excellency Shridath Ramphal, will be the guest of the Canadian Government on an official visit to Ottawa July 8-11. He will have a general exchange of views with the Prime Minister, ministers and officials and will discuss specific programmes and activities in the area of Commonwealth functional co-operation.

A distinguished Commonwealth Caribbean statesman, Mr. Ramphal has been appointed by Commonwealth Heads of Government as Secretary-General with effect July 1 to succeed Mr. Arnold Smith of Canada who has served two terms as Secretary-General from the establishment of the office in 1965. Mr. Ramphal was a member of the Guyana cabinet since 1965, serving as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Justice since 1972. Attached is a biographical note.

Discussions will focus on the new initiatives taken by Heads of Government at their meeting in Jamaica in May 1975, looking ahead to the Commonwealth Finance Ministers Meeting in Guyana this August and to the biennial Senior Officials Meeting in 1976, in Canberra. Specific programmes to be touched on during this visit are the growing Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (CFTC), the new Food Production and Rural Development Programme, the Commonwealth Youth Programme, and Secretariat matters generally.

Of particular current interest are the Commonwealth initiatives on the new economic order. Mr. Ramphal will be participating in the opening session of the Commonwealth Experts Group (McIntyre Group), which is meeting in Ottawa July 9-31.

Arriving in Ottawa from Toronto at 11:45 Tuesday, July 8, the Secretary-General will be accommodated at the Château Laurier. He leaves in the morning of Friday, July 11 for London, England, via Toronto.