



NEWS RELEASE

February 16, 1990

PROGRESS OF NEGOTIATIONS ON OPEN SKIES

OTTAWA -- Following the conclusion of a major East-West ministerial gathering in Ottawa last Tuesday, officials from NATO and Warsaw Treaty Organization (WTO) countries have begun the negotiation process to establish the outlines of an Open Skies regime.

Work began in earnest on Thursday with a plenary meeting and with the formation of four subsidiary working groups chaired respectively by Canada, The Netherlands, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria (see ANNEX for more details). These groups will report to the plenary session twice a week, on Tuesday mornings and Thursday afternoons, after which there will be a media briefing by the Secretary-General of the Conference Mr. Fred Bild in room 103 of the Government Conference Centre (a separate notice will be sent to the press gallery prior to each briefing).

The Open Skies Conference in Ottawa is likely to conclude on February 28. The negotiations between NATO and WTO countries are expected to be concluded and an agreement signed at a second Open Skies Conference, to be held in April-May of this year in Budapest, Hungary.

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