



communiqué

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CANADA SIGNS MEMORANDUM OF INTENT ON AIR POLLUTION WITH THE UNITED STATES

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mark MacGuigan, and the Minister of the Environment, John Roberts, announced today that Canada has signed a Memorandum of Intent on transboundary air pollution with the United States.

The Memorandum was signed in Washington by Canadian Ambassador Peter Towe and Environment Minister John Roberts. Signing for the United States were Edmund Muskie, Secretary of State, and Douglas Costle, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

The Memorandum is part of efforts to develop measures with the United States to reduce transboundary air pollution, especially the problem of acid rain which threatens large areas of Central and Eastern Canada. Ontario Environment Minister Harry Parrott also attended the Washington signing ceremony.

The Memorandum represents a step forward by pledging both governments at senior levels to negotiate an air pollution agreement. It establishes a committee structure which will undertake needed preparatory work in the coming months. This would be followed by formal negotiations.

The Memorandum also pledges both governments to take interim actions under current authority to deal with this problem, pending conclusion of an agreement. Among the measures called for are:

-- the promotion of vigorous enforcement of existing laws and regulations in a way which is responsive to the problem of transboundary air pollution during the period in which new domestic control strategies and policies are being developed;