



No. 123

May 31, 1990.

## CANADA ATTENDS GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS)

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, today announced that Canada will attend the 20th General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS) to be held in Asuncion, Paraguay, June 4 - 8.

The Minister for External Relations and International Development, the Honourable Monique Landry, will lead the Canadian delegation to the General Assembly which is the first since Canada became a full member of the Organization in January, 1990.

"Canada is seeking to play a more active role in Latin America. Our participation in this General Assembly provides an excellent opportunity to address, at the ministerial level, the issues of greatest concern in the hemisphere today," stated Mr. Clark.

The General Assembly is the annual meeting of the 33 OAS member states. The meeting will address a series of resolutions in such critical areas as human rights, economic development, illicit drug trafficking, the environment, and regional political issues.

"Canada has been contributing over the years to a number of OAS-affiliated development organizations working in agriculture and health care. However, now that Canada has formally joined the Organization, we are in a better position to play an active role in formulating OAS policies," added Mr. Clark. "The General Assembly provides an ideal forum for Canada to reinforce its growing dialogue with Latin America."

At the General Assembly, Madame Landry will be submitting for discussion a number of proposals aimed at strengthening and revitalizing the Organization. These initiatives will advocate a more active political role for the OAS, increased support for democratic development, and a summit meeting of the heads of state and government of the member countries. Madame Landry will also be seeking Canada's election to CICAD, the OAS anti-drug organization. This organization has contributed to the development of anti-drug strategies and sharing of information on drug issues among OAS members.