

The Department of External Affairs announced today that it is anticipated that the second round of the Canada-Cuba claims negotiations will be held in Havana late in 1973. In these negotiations the Canadian Government is attempting to obtain compensation in respect of the property of Canadian citizens which has been nationalized, confiscated or otherwise taken by the Government of Cuba.

Persons who were Canadian citizens at the time their property was taken by Cuba and who have not already informed the Claims Section of the Department of External Affairs at Ottawa of their claims are urged to do so immediately, in order that their claims may be taken into account during the current negotiations. Unless notice of such claims, containing sufficient information to identify clearly the subject matter of the claims, has been received by the Department of External Affairs prior to the coming into force of any eventual agreement with the Cuban Government, the Foreign Claims Commission, when making recommendations regarding the eligibility of individual claims and the distribution of the proceeds of the settlement, will not be able to consider such claims.

While some progress has been made in the negotiations, it is not yet possible to forecast when a settlement will be reached.

The attention of claimants is drawn to the fact that separate and individual functions are carried out in relation to the claims process, by the Department of External Affairs and subsequently by the Foreign Claims Commission. The Department of External Affairs collects and analyses information from Canadian claimants, concerning the nature of their claims, in order to be in a position to seek agreement with a foreign country. The Foreign Claims Commission, a quasi-judicial body established by Order-in-Council PC-1970-2077 of December 8, 1970, studies these claims further, after the signing of the agreement, and then reports and makes recommendations to Ministers on whether individual claims are eligible and on the distribution of the awards in respect of claims.