

COMMUNIQUE

NATO SCIENCE COMMITTEE TO MEET IN OTTAWA

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES EXTÉRIEURES

1974 marks the 25th anniversary of the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty. The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Mitchell Sharp, and the Minister of State for Science and Technology, the Honourable Jeanne Sauvé, announced today that during this 25th anniversary year, Canada will host a meeting of the NATO Science Committee to take place in Ottawa, September 24-26.

In looking back over the past 25 years, one is struck by the profound changes that have taken place in the Alliance and by the capacity it has demonstrated to respond to new tasks and challenges. The late Lester B. Pearson attached considerable importance to Article II of the North Atlantic Treaty which emphasizes the desirability of co-operation among Alliance members in fields outside the traditional politico-military sphere. In 1956, Mr. Pearson, Mr. Gaetano Martino of Italy and Mr. Halvard Lange of Norway were given the task of exploring the possibilities for non-military co-operation among NATO member countries.

This three-man study group, later to be known as the "Three Wise Men", pointed out that "one area of special importance to the Atlantic Community is that of science and technology". As a result of the group's recommendations, NATO established a task force which suggested a permanent NATO Science Committee and the appointment of a science adviser to the Secretary General.

The Science Committee is comprised of national delegates highly qualified to speak authoritatively on science policy. The Committee is chaired by the Assistant Secretary General for Science and Environmental Affairs, who, with the aid of a small scientific staff, is responsible for implementing the Committee's decisions, administering various science programmes and advising the NATO Secretary General on scientific matters.

NATO's science activities consist of two sets of programmes; General and Special Science Programmes with a total annual budget of about \$6,000,000.

The General Science Programmes are designed to stimulate the international exchange of scientific information, the key to effective co-operation. They include the awarding of science fellowships and research grants and the funding of advanced study institutes. Science fellowships encourage the exchange of post-graduate and post-doctoral students in both pure and applied sciences. The research grants offer financial support for ongoing research projects requiring international collaboration. The advanced study institutes, a series of high-level scientific seminars about 50 of which are held each year, bring scientists from many countries together to study a particular subject.

The Special Science Programmes support a series of topical short-term studies in applied science on subjects as diverse as oceanography, meteorology, the environment and the social sciences.

These programmes are continually reassessed both in relation to NATO's other activities and to new developments in international and national support for scientific work. Although specific activities supported by the Committee have changed over the years, NATO continues to base its science programme on the premise that member countries share certain scientific and technological interests that can be advanced through

international co-operation. With its belief in the universality of science, the Committee has also been a forerunner in the field of East/West co-operation and scientists from some Eastern European countries have participated in NATO science activities.

Canada has been a major contributor to NATO science activities both in the tri-annual meetings of the Committee and in most of its specialized sub-committees. The fact that a Canadian expert sits on each of the seven Special Programme Panels indicates the high regard in which Canadian scientists are held among their colleagues from other NATO countries.

Activities of NATO bodies such as the Science Committee indicate that NATO is making a regular contribution to the search for solutions to problems in the fields of science and the environment, that affect the well-being of all its members.