



news release

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CANADIAN AS SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, and the Honourable Benoit Bouchard, Minister of Transport, today welcomed the recommendation by the Council of the International Maritime Organization (I.M.O.) to appoint William A. O'Neil as Secretary General of the Organization.

Once approved by the IMO Assembly in November, Mr. O'Neil will become the sixth Secretary General of the London-based world shipping organization replacing Mr. Srivastava of India who occupied this position since 1974. Mr. O'Neil, whose election the Canadian Government has fully supported, will take office in January 1990.

"I am very pleased that the IMO Council has recommended that the position of Secretary General of the IMO be assumed by a Canadian, especially in view of the particular importance that IMO accords to marine environment protection", said Mr. Clark. Moreover, he added, "since no Canadian has headed a United Nations specialized agency for over forty years, Mr. O'Neil's selection by the 32-member council is a special honour for Canada and a proud moment for all Canadians."

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Canada's Transport Minister Benoit Bouchard also expressed satisfaction that this prestigious organization has recognized the distinguished career of Mr. O'Neil in the Canadian public service. "I am pleased that his competence and dedication will now be devoted to the international maritime community", said Mr. Bouchard.

Mr. O'Neil is a native of Ottawa and has had more than forty years experience in maritime affairs. A former head of the Canadian Coast Guard, he is currently President of the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority. Mr. O'Neil enjoys a solid international reputation, having served as Chairman of the IMO Council for the last ten years, and as a governor of the World Maritime University in Malmo, Sweden.

Canada attaches great importance to the work of the IMO, which has as its main objective the facilitation of cooperation among governments on technical matters affecting international shipping, in order to achieve the highest practicable standards of maritime safety and efficiency in navigation. Canada was the first charter member of the IMO (1948) and, since its inception, has participated fully and constructively in all of its executive bodies.

BIOGRAPHIC NOTES
M. WILLIAM A. O'NEIL

Mr. O'Neil was born on June 6, 1927 in Ottawa, Ontario. He has graduated in Civil Engineering from the University of Toronto, and, shortly after, joined the Federal Department of Transport as an engineer. In 1975, Mr. O'Neil was named the first commissioner of the Canadian Coast Guard, with responsibilities for all Coast Guard activities throughout Canada. In this capacity, he was named in 1981 Honorary Commodore in the Canadian Coast Guard.

Mr. O'Neil has been involved in IMO affairs since 1972. He was elected Chairman of the IMO Council in 1979 and has since remained in this position. Mr. O'Neil was also appointed, in 1983, to the Board of Governors of the World Maritime University in Malmo, Sweden.

Mr. O'Neil currently holds the position of President of the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority. He is married and father of three children.