



# communiqué

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## VISIT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF ACTC

The Minister of External Relations, the Honourable Pierre De Bané, announced today that the newly-elected Secretary General of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation, Mr. François OWONO-NGUEMA, will pay an official visit to Canada from March 28 to April 3, 1982. In Ottawa, the Secretary General will be received by His Excellency the Governor General and will meet with the Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Pierre Elliott Trudeau. This visit, which falls at the end of the Agency's first decade and marks the beginning of the Secretary General's four-year term, will give him an opportunity to discuss in detail with Mr. De Bané future perspectives and organizational programmes. Mr. Owono-Nguema will also call on other members of the Cabinet as well as on the President of the Canadian International Development Agency. He will then visit New Brunswick on March 31 and Quebec on April 1 and 2 for talks with the governments of these provinces which have the status of participating governments in the Agency.

The Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation is a grouping of countries which use French as a common language. Its present membership includes thirty member states, six associate states and two participating governments. Its purpose is to promote the national languages and cultures of the participants and to increase cultural and technical co-operation among them. The Agency's programmes have been set up to achieve this objective; they focus on the promotion of national languages and cultures, the development of national cultures and modern educational techniques, scientific and technical co-operation contributing to the pooling of research adapted to the needs and resources of each country, and, finally, mobilization of populations for their economic and social development.

The Agency's total budget for fiscal year 1982 is \$18,369,321. Canada's share of the ordinary budget is 34.7%, which includes 3% from the government of Quebec and 0.3% from the government of New Brunswick, both participants.

Mr. François Owono-Nguema, the third Secretary General, assumed his duties on March 1, 1982. A native of Gabon, he holds a Master of Science degree in physics and mathematics from the Universities of Lille and Strasbourg, France, (1962), a Diplôme d'études supérieures in theoretical physics from the University of Lille (1964) and a Doctorate in science with a nuclear physics option from the University of Strasbourg (1968). From 1970 to 1975, he was successively vice-rector and rector of the Université nationale du Gabon, now the Université Omar Bongo. He also pursued an administrative and political career and was named High Commissioner of Scientific Research in 1972 and Secretary of State for Culture and Arts in 1973. He was Minister of Scientific Research responsible for the environment and the protection of nature from 1975 to 1980, and Minister of State responsible for culture, arts and public education from 1980 to 1982. He led the Gabonese delegation to a number of international conferences, two of which were ACTC general conferences.