



communiqué

N°:
No.: 167

October 1st, 1986.

CONSULTATIVE GROUP TO DISCUSS INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT AND DEFENCE

The Right Honourable Joe Clark, Secretary of State for External Affairs, today announced the convening of the Consultative Group on Disarmament and Arms Control Affairs. This meeting of the Consultative Group, which will include over 50 Canadians - representatives of non-governmental organizations, academics and concerned individuals - will take place at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa from October 2 to 4.

Mr. Clark said that this year the Consultative Group discussions will focus on the interrelationship between arms control and disarmament and defence. This theme responds in part to the observation in the report of the Special Joint Committee on Canada's International Relations, that decisions about defence policy should not be taken without due regard to their consequences for arms control, and that "arms control and disarmament policy, on the one hand, and defence policy, on the other, should move in tandem." The theme of the meeting will be treated from the perspectives of Canada's membership in NATO, NORAD and the United Nations.

The Consultative Group meeting will be under the Chairmanship of the Ambassador for Disarmament, Mr. Douglas Roche, whose responsibilities include representing Canada in the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly and the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

Mr. Clark announced that Canada's Minister of National Defence, the Honourable Perrin Beatty, will address the opening session of the meeting on October 2.

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The Consultative Group was created in 1979 in response to the recommendation of the first United Nations Special Session on Disarmament (UNSSOD I) in 1978. It meets periodically with the Ambassador for Disarmament and with officials of the Department of External Affairs and other interested Departments to exchange views on matters of mutual interest relevant to Canada's policies on disarmament and arms control.