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THE CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF EDUCATION
OF FRENCH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES (CONFEMEN)

32ND SESSION

QUEBEC, APRIL 25-27, 1979

Secretary of State for External Affairs Don Jamieson today announced that Canada will be the site this week of the 32nd session of the Conference of Ministers of Education of French-speaking Countries (CONFEMEN).

Organized by the Government of Quebec, the Conference of Ministers of Education will take place in Quebec City from April 25 to 27, and will be preceded by a meeting of experts of the African and Malagasyan Council of Higher Education (CAMES).

The major purpose of the Conference of Ministers of Education of French-speaking Countries is to promote the adjustment of systems and methods of education to the changing conditions of the modern world and to the economic and social development needs of member countries. The agenda of the 32nd session includes the theme "School and Life" as well as questions such as the production of pedagogical material and pedagogical research and innovations. This conference and the Conference of Ministers of Youth and Sport of French-speaking Countries (CONFESJES) together with the Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation (ACCT) constitute the inter-governmental institutions of "la Francophonie internationale".

Canada has participated in these conferences since 1969. They have been held annually in one of the member states.

Interested provincial governments play a major role in these conferences. The Canadian delegation is usually led by a provincial minister and includes representatives of provinces concerned and various advisers from federal and provincial governments.

The Canadian delegation to the 32nd session of the Conference of Ministers of Education of French-speaking Countries will be led by Jean-Pierre Ouellet, Minister of Youth, Leisure and Cultural Resources of New Brunswick, who will also represent his government within the Canadian delegation. Quebec will be represented by Mr. Jacques-Yvan Morin, Deputy Premier and Minister of Education, who was elected Vice-President of the conference at its 31st session held last year in Ouagadougou, Upper Volta. Ontario will be represented by Mr. Gérard Raymond, Assistant Deputy Minister of Education, and Manitoba by Mr. Gérard Lécuyer of the French Education Bureau in the Department of Education.

On April 24 the ministers and heads of delegation will attend a dinner given in their honour by Jeanne Sauv , Federal Minister of Communications and Adviser for Francophone Affairs to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. The following day, the ministers and heads of delegation will travel to Quebec for the official opening of the 32nd session. After the conference, they will visit Fredericton on April 28 and 29 as guests of the Government of New Brunswick.

The member states of the CONFEMEN are: Belgium, Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Congo, Ivory Coast, Central African Empire, France, Gabon, Haiti, Upper Volta, Mauritius, Madagascar, Mali, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Chad, Togo, Zaire. Djibouti's application for membership will be considered at this conference.

The following countries have been invited to participate in the conference in an observer capacity: Cape Verde Islands, Comores, Dominica, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Morocco, Mauritania, St. Lucia, Sao Tome & Principe, Seychelles, Tunisia.