

# ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE MEETING

The Seventh Commonwealth Health Ministers Meeting was held in the Conference Centre, Ottawa, Canada, from 2 to 7 October 1983.

These Meetings are held every three years, previous ones having taken place in Britain (Edinburgh, 1965), Uganda (Kampala, 1968), Mauritius (Port Louis, 1971), Sri Lanka (Colombo, 1974), New Zealand (Wellington, 1977), and Tanzania (Arusha, 1980). The offer of the Government of Canada to host the 1983 Meeting was made in Arusha in 1980 and accepted with appreciation by other Commonwealth governments.

The theme for the Seventh Meeting - Health Planning and Management - was decided on at the annual one-day Geneva meeting of Commonwealth Health Ministers before the World Health Assembly in 1982, and the topics to be discussed were finalised at the 1983 Pre-WHA Meeting, at which the choice of the lead speakers was endorsed. The agenda, programme and administrative arrangements were also considered at meetings of the Liaison Committee of representatives of Commonwealth governments in London early in 1982 and 1983.

Administrative arrangements for the Ottawa Meeting were made jointly by the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Canadian Department of National Health and Welfare. The Commonwealth Secretary-General was responsible for the general organisation of the Meeting and the Secretariat's Medical Adviser was the Secretary to the Meeting. The Government of Canada was responsible for the provision of facilities at the Ottawa Conference Centre, and supplied staff to work with the small Secretariat party, liaison staff to assist delegations, and transport. The Canadian Government bore the cost of accommodation for heads of delegations and the Commonwealth Secretary-General.

The generous co-operation, support and hospitality provided by the Government of Canada were greatly appreciated by all delegations and by the Commonwealth Secretariat.

The Canadian Minister of National Health and Welfare, the Hon Monique Bégin, was elected Chairman of the Meeting, which was attended by delegations from 42 member countries, 36 of them headed by Ministers. Delegations included permanent secretaries, chief medical and nursing officers and health planners. Observers from the World Health Organisation, the Commonwealth Medical Association, the Commonwealth Nurses Federation, the International Planned Parenthood Federation, and (by special permission of Health Ministers) Disabled Peoples International were also present. It was agreed that observer status at future triennial Health Ministers Meetings should be accorded to the Commonwealth Pharmaceutical Association.

On the eve of the opening ceremony, a preliminary meeting of heads of delegations approved the agenda and programme for the Meeting; decided on the composition of the three main committees; and set up a steering committee composed of the Chairman of the Meeting, the chairmen and vice-chairmen of committees, and senior officers of the Secretariat and the host Government.

At the opening ceremony, the Meeting was declared open by the Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs of Canada, the Hon Allan



