



Symposium Opens Dialogue to Strengthen Science to Protect Canadians

Ottawa, May 12, 2010 – The *Public Science in Canada: Strengthening Science and Policy to Protect Canadians Symposium*, which begins today at the Hilton Lac Leamy in Gatineau, focuses on the crucial role science plays in ensuring the health and safety of all Canadians.

The Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada (PIPSC) is hosting the three-day symposium to foster dialogue on the state of the delivery of science for sound policy advice. PIPSC is the union representing federal scientists whose work impacts the daily lives of Canadians. They approve safe food and drugs, develop vaccines and other medications, issue weather forecasts and storm warnings, conduct air safety research, and develop better grains to feed the world.

Remarked Gary Corbett, Professional Institute President and Symposium Chair: “The Symposium comes at a time when Canada faces major challenges on environmental protection, energy, pandemic response, food and drug safety, and national security, for example. There is no better time to have the discussion with scientists, policy-makers, decision-makers and public opinion leaders on how to best deliver science for the benefit of Canadians. By hosting this Symposium, the Professional Institute is demonstrating its commitment to be the voice of public science in Canada.”

Science and technology shapes the foundation on which the government is able to promote innovation, ensure economic prosperity, support regulatory functions and maintain Canada’s health and security. Canadian scientists protect the bio-security of Canadian agriculture, safeguard the environment and enhancing community development. Engineers ensure roads and bridges are safe. Nurses provide care to Northern communities and veterans. Scientists monitor the earth’s tremors, scrutinize the receding polar ice caps and study climate change. Computer specialists ensure that the government’s technological infrastructure is sound, and that the information it contains is safe from prying eyes. Science and technology make significant contributions to Canada’s economic and community development. The symposium seeks to strengthen the voice of the scientific community, particularly in relation to influencing government commitment and priorities in science.

The Symposium begins at 3 p.m. on May 12, 2010 with a unique dialogue between renowned science broadcaster and environmental activist **Dr. David Suzuki** and former leader of the opposition and founder of the Reform Party **Preston Manning**. Shortly after 6 p.m. the same day, Treasury Board President Stockwell Day will address the welcome reception.

On Thursday, May 13 at 10 a.m., internationally renowned **Stephen Lewis** will give the keynote address, “Science and Global Issues”.

Panellists include scientists, policy makers, decision makers and public opinion leaders from government, universities, media and international organizations. Discussion themes will address the following:

- * meeting the challenge for public science in the 21st century (panel of Deputy Ministers)
- * fostering innovation in the public sector
- * S&T and foresight
- * the role and impact of public science
- * international perspectives on science and policy with
 - Dr. Francesca Grifo, Senior Scientist, Union of Concerned Scientists, USA
 - Paul Noon, General Secretary, Prospect Union of Professionals, UK
 - Dr. Anders Buch, Danish Society of Engineers.

The detailed program is available at www.sciencesymposium2010.ca. Some of the Canadian speakers include:

- Dr. Andrew J. Weaver, School of Earth and Ocean Sciences, University of Victoria
- Dr. Professor Peter A. Singer, Professor of Medicine, Sun Life Financial Chair in Bioethics and Director at the McLaughlin-Rotman Centre for Global Health
- Dr. Charles Thomas McElroy, Senior Research Scientist
- Dr. Frank Graves, President, EKOS Research.

The Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada, founded in 1920, is a national union. Among its 57,000 federal and provincial members are 23,000 professionals who deliver, among other knowledge products, scientific research, testing and advice for sound policy-making.

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