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CLARK CONDEMNS SOVIET ACTIONS IN LITHUANIA

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, called in the Soviet Ambassador today to condemn Soviet military actions in Lithuania.

"We deplore the use of force against the democratically elected government and the people of Lithuania," Mr. Clark stated. "Such actions are contrary to the assurances given to me by Foreign Minister Shevardnadze and repeated to Prime Minister Mulroney by President Gorbachev, that there would be no crackdown in the Baltics."

Mr. Clark urged restraint in this dangerous situation and called on the Soviet authorities to refrain from further violence. He emphasized that the Soviet Union must adhere to its obligations under the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) and negotiate solutions based on the principles of the Helsinki Final Act.

Mr. Clark underlined that further recourse to military force would have grave consequences for Canada-Soviet relations, and the new international order we are all trying to build. "We remind the Soviet Union that at this time of heightened international tension, the world is watching events not only in the Gulf, but in the U.S.S.R. as well," he stated.

"We want to help the Soviet Union and its people through this difficult transition period," said Mr. Clark, "but much now depends on continuation of Soviet reforms by that country's authorities."

An officer from the Canadian Embassy in Moscow is in Vilnius to provide consular assistance to Canadians in the region. Departmental officials are also in continuous contact with representatives of the Canadian Baltic communities concerning developments in the region.

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For further information, media representatives may contact:

Media Relations Office
External Affairs and International Trade Canada
(613) 995-1874