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OUELLET TO LEAD DELEGATION TO THE NPT REVIEW AND EXTENSION CONFERENCE

Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet today announced that he will lead the Canadian delegation to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review and Extension Conference, which takes place April 17-May 12, in New York.

"The NPT serves fundamental global and regional security interests. Canada is actively committed to ensuring it continues to do so. The treaty prevents the spread of nuclear weapons and binds nuclear weapons states to disarmament. The NPT also provides the framework for co-operation in civilian uses of nuclear technology and materials. For these reasons, the Canadian government supports the indefinite, unconditional extension of this crucial agreement," said Mr. Ouellet.

The NPT came into force on March 5, 1970. It stipulates that states parties should meet 25 years after that date to decide whether to extend the treaty for a fixed period of time, for a series of fixed periods or indefinitely. Some 175 countries have signed and ratified the treaty. Canada was among the original signatories of the NPT.

Mr. Ouellet will address the Conference on April 18. He is accompanied on the delegation by Canada's Ambassador for Disarmament, Christopher Westdal.

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For further information, media representatives may contact:

Media Relations Office
Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade
(613) 995-1874

