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OUELLET ANNOUNCES DELEGATION TO THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet today announced that Human Resources Development Minister Lloyd Axworthy will lead Canada's official delegation to the World Summit for Social Development (WSSD) in Copenhagen, Denmark.

"This event marks the first time the international community is focussing on the need to combine economic progress with social progress and environmental sustainability. In keeping with our commitment to global security, Canada supports the Summit goals of addressing the interrelated problems of poverty, unemployment and social disintegration," said Mr. Ouellet.

Representatives from over 180 countries will gather in Copenhagen, March 6-12, to discuss a new international approach to meeting the social and economic needs of people in a sustainable way. World leaders will approve a Declaration and Program of Action outlining international and national strategies aimed at reducing poverty, unemployment and the social exclusion of marginalized and disadvantaged groups.

"Canada has been recognized time and again by the United Nations for the excellent quality of life its citizens enjoy. The central themes of the Copenhagen meeting are goals to which the Canadian government is firmly committed, both inside the country and in our international relations," said Mr. Axworthy.

Secretary of State for Training and Youth, Ethel Blondin-Andrew, will join Mr. Axworthy at the WSSD. Members of the Canadian delegation include representatives from British Columbia, Manitoba and Quebec. In addition, labour, private-sector, non-governmental and Aboriginal organizations will be represented on the Canadian delegation.

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