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SECRETARY OF STATE STEWART TO ATTEND COMMONWEALTH MINISTERIAL MEETING IN LONDON

Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet today announced that Secretary of State (Latin America and Africa) Christine Stewart will attend on his behalf the first meeting of the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group on the Harare Declaration. The meeting will take place on December 20 in London.

Commonwealth Heads of Government established the Ministerial Action Group last month at their meeting in New Zealand, following an initiative by Prime Minister Jean Chrétien to increase the Commonwealth's effectiveness in promoting democracy.

"While this group has a broad mandate to work for democratization throughout the Commonwealth, clearly the focus of the first meeting will be on efforts to restore democracy in Nigeria, Sierra Leone and the Gambia," said Mrs. Stewart. "Following the swift and decisive action taken by the Commonwealth Heads of Government last month, a number of options have been put forward and will be discussed."

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