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QUELLET DEPLORES POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN EL SALVADOR

Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet today deplored the resurgence of political violence in El Salvador.

"Although much progress has been made since the end of the civil war last December, the increase in violence in El Salvador could jeopardize the peace process and preparations for the March 1994 elections," said Mr. Ouellet.

Since October, several officials of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) and members of the Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA) have been murdered. On December 9, José Mario Lopez, a member of the FMLN's collective leadership, was assassinated in San Salvador.

Mr. Ouellet emphasized that those responsible for these crimes must be brought to justice. Two commissions of inquiry have been established in El Salvador. A government commission, assisted by outside investigators, is examining some of the recent killings. An independent commission will investigate political violence perpetrated by illegal armed groups since the signing of the peace accords in January 1992.

Christine Stewart, Secretary of State, Latin American and Africa, reaffirmed Canada's support for the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL) during her visit to the United Nations in New York earlier this week. The Mission monitors the implementation of the peace accords, respect for human rights and electoral preparations.

Canada has contributed approximately \$240,000 to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) for training and equipping election officials, and to Salvadoran non-governmental organizations to promote electoral participation.

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