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CANADA EXPANDS NUCLEAR SAFETY PROGRAM IN RUSSIA

Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet today announced that Canada and the Russian Federation have signed, in Moscow, a Memorandum of Understanding launching the Nuclear Safety and Engineering Program.

"Nuclear safety is one of the most important issues to address in the countries of the former Soviet Union. Canada is committed to helping these countries run their nuclear power plants as safely as possible," said Mr. Ouellet.

Under the Nuclear Safety and Engineering Program, Canadian personnel from Atomic Energy of Canada Limited will work full-time in nuclear power plants in Russia, bringing first-hand Canadian experience to their Russian counterparts. The Canadians will give training in Canadian safety procedures, help improve safety practices at the Russian plants, and provide engineering designs for safety improvements in the plants. The total cost of the program will be \$10 million over two years. The project is a major element of the three-year, \$30-million Canadian Nuclear Safety Initiative (CNSI), announced in June 1992.

Another important element of the CNSI — the Regulatory Co-operation Program — began in early June, 1994. The program consists of a series of internships with the Atomic Energy Control Board for senior officials of the nuclear regulatory agencies of Russia, Ukraine, and Lithuania. It will familiarize the visiting officials with the Canadian approach to regulating the nuclear power industry, including licensing and safety regulations.

Funding for these initiatives was provided for in the February 1994 federal budget and is therefore built into the existing fiscal framework.

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