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CANADA EXPANDS ASSISTANCE TO CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, today announced that Canada is stepping up its co-operation with countries of Eastern and Central Europe which are developing democratic societies and market economies. Canada's emphasis is on applying Canadian skills and support to democratic and economic reforms. The Canadian private sector is intensively involved in providing skills, investment, joint ventures and practical experience in developing democratic institutions. Mr. Clark announced that Canada will provide an additional \$60 million, over three years, to support that program.

Last year, Canada announced a program of \$72 million support for projects in Poland and Hungary. Along with other OECD countries who form the "Group of 24", Canada will now extend that help to Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, the German Democratic Republic and Yugoslavia. In principle, Canada is prepared to work with Romania when that country demonstrates consistent respect for human rights and the rule of law.

The major components of Canada's assistance are a political co-operation programme, support for the restructuring of Central and East European economies and support for the promotion of trade between Canada and Central and Eastern Europe.

"Canada will help any Central and East European country that has shown by its actions that it is genuinely committed to political and economic reform," stated Mr. Clark.

Mr. Clark made the announcement at a ministerial meeting in Brussels of the "Group of 24".

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