

# News Release

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## OUELLET MARKS 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY

In a statement marking the 25th anniversary of its entry into force, Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet today reaffirmed Canada's commitment to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and called for its indefinite, unconditional extension at the upcoming Review and Extension Conference in New York in April.

"The NPT enhances our security by limiting the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Canada firmly believes that it should be made a permanent fixture of international law," said Mr. Ouellet. "The world community must take advantage of the current high degree of international co-operation to enshrine indefinitely this most important document, which underpins regional and global security."

The Treaty entered into force on March 5, 1970. Signed and ratified by 171 countries, it enjoys the widest adherence of any arms control agreement in history. The treaty prevents the spread of nuclear weapons by restricting their possession to the five original nuclear powers – the United States, Russia, China, the United Kingdom and France – and commits the nuclear weapons states to negotiations leading to the elimination of their nuclear arsenals. It also establishes the framework for co-operation in the civil uses of nuclear energy.

Because of the political climate at the time, the Treaty was limited in duration to 25 years after its entry into force. A decision must be reached on whether to extend the Treaty indefinitely, or for a fixed period or periods of time. Canada is firmly committed to the indefinite, unconditional extension of the NPT.

The NPT Review and Extension Conference will be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York, April 17 to May 12.

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