



news release

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CANADIAN NAVAL DEMONSTRATION FOR OFFICERS OF MIDDLE EASTERN NAVIES

Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet today announced that Canada will lead a demonstration of Maritime Confidence-Building Measures for officers of Middle Eastern naval forces. The exercise, which is held in the context of the Middle East Peace Process, will take place on July 15 out of the Italian port of Venice. The Canadian and American warships — HMCS *Halifax* and USS *Santa Barbara* — currently stationed in the Mediterranean will participate, as will aviation units of the Italian Navy.

"This is another example of Canada's active contribution to the Middle East Peace Process. We are very pleased to be able to contribute to and support such positive steps toward a more peaceful and secure future for the Middle East," said Mr. Ouellet.

The demonstration is part of a series of activities led by Canada within the Arms Control and Regional Security Working Group of the multilateral phase of the Middle East Peace Process. Previous activities have included workshops in Sydney, Nova Scotia, in September 1993, and in Antalya, Turkey, last March. Discussions at these workshops, which were attended by Israeli and Arab naval officers, focused on Canadian proposals for enhanced maritime co-operation in the Middle East, particularly in the areas of Search and Rescue and Prevention of Incidents at Sea.

The naval demonstration near Venice is intended to allow Middle Eastern naval officers to acquire first-hand experience of the implementation of the Maritime Confidence-Building Measures under discussion.

Attached is a backgrounder which provides more details on Canada's contribution to maritime confidence-building in the Middle East.

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