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CANADA CONGRATULATES UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER GROUP ON COMPLETION OF CONTRA DEMOBILIZATION

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, and the Minister of National Defence, the Honourable Bill McKnight, today conveyed congratulations to the Commander of the United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA), General Augustin Quesada Gomez on the key role ONUCA has played in the demobilization of the Nicaraguan Resistance (contras).

"The demobilization has been a delicate and demanding process," Mr. Clark noted. "Its successful outcome was made possible, in large measure, by the dedication and restraint demonstrated by the ONUCA forces, and by the close cooperation they enjoyed with all parties involved," he said.

"I join Canadians in congratulating the Government and people of Nicaragua on the completion of the demobilization process, which, I trust, will mark the end of Nicaragua's civil conflict," Mr. Clark declared. He also expressed the hope that all Nicaraguans would now co-operate in rebuilding their nation in a spirit of reconciliation.

Mr. McKnight extended special recognition and thanks to the 170 members of the Canadian Forces serving in Central America with ONUCA. "Our peacekeepers have shown great resourcefulness and professionalism in difficult and politically sensitive circumstances," he said. "Their efforts have been in the finest tradition of Canadian peacekeeping".

.../2