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# news release

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## CANADA WELCOMES UN DECISION TO ESTABLISH HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet today welcomed the decision by a Working Group composed of all United Nations members to establish a UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

"This decision, in which Canada played a leading role, is a significant step in the promotion and protection of human rights by the UN," Mr. Ouellet said.

The High Commissioner, to be appointed by the UN Secretary-General, with the approval of the UN General Assembly, will have broad authority to promote and protect internationally recognized human rights.

The creation of this high-level post is a significant step in strengthening the capacity of the international community to influence governments to fulfil their human rights obligations. The Minister emphasized that governments bear ultimate responsibility for ensuring respect for human rights.

At the recent World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna last June, Canada was a key player in ensuring that the proposal for a High Commissioner was considered by the General Assembly. Canada will continue to work to ensure that the decision of the Working Group is adopted by the General Assembly within the next week.

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