



No. 53

March 17, 1992

CANADA SUPPORTS PEACE EFFORTS IN NAGORNO-KARABAKH

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Barbara McDougall, today said that Canada supports efforts by the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), the United Nations and countries in the region to bring peace to Nagorno-Karabakh.

"Progress must be made soon to avoid further bloodshed," said Mrs. McDougall. "I am pleased that the Chairman of the CSCE Council of Ministers has called a conference to bring the parties together, as I requested in a letter to him last week."

Mrs. McDougall said that a Canadian Forces Challenger jet is being made available to fly a CSCE-sponsored group, including a Canadian peacekeeping specialist, to the region later this week to lay the groundwork for future mediation efforts. Furthermore, Mrs. McDougall and other CSCE foreign ministers will hold a special meeting in Helsinki on March 24 to advance the peace process.

The Minister noted that Canada was the first Western country to provide medical relief to the people of Nagorno-Karabakh. The shipment of \$250,000 worth of medicine and medical supplies recently arrived in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, and is now being distributed in Nagorno-Karabakh. Similar supplies have also been sent to Yerevan for distribution in Armenia.

Mrs. McDougall welcomed efforts by Russia, Iran and Turkey to broker a cease-fire and said that the appointment of Cyrus Vance as the United Nations Secretary-General's special envoy will also be useful in finding a peaceful solution to the conflict.

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