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McDOUGALL COMMENTS ON UN SECRETARY-GENERAL'S REPORT ON SOMALIA

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Barbara McDougall, today noted that the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, had submitted a report to the United Nations Security Council pursuant to the Security Council's Resolution 794. In this context, she expressed her satisfaction that the Canadian troops involved in "Operation Deliverance," mandated by Resolution 794, are making a significant contribution toward the objective of the mission. Resolution 794, adopted on December 3, 1992, says that the objective of the Unified Task Force in Somalia is to "establish a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations in Somalia as soon as possible."

Mrs. McDougall welcomed the information that the flow of food and humanitarian aid out of Mogadishu is increasing and reasserted her view that feeding the starving population of Somalia is the most urgent task faced by the Unified Task Force.

She also expressed the view that, in order to create a "secure environment" in Somalia, the Unified Task Force should take effective action to ensure that the heavy weapons of the organized factions be brought under international control and that armed gangs be disarmed.

"It will not be good enough to feed the starving populations if armed gangs are in a position to move back in, immediately after the task force has departed," said the Minister.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs said that the operation has just begun and will have to evolve in accordance with the situation on the ground. The geography of Somalia, the length of unpatrolled borders and the sheer numbers of weapons in that country will require the Unified Task Force to carefully assess how it can meet its

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