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CANADA WELCOMES THE NEW FRAMEWORK FOR AGREEMENT CONCERNING NORTHERN IRELAND

Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet today welcomed the *New Framework for Agreement concerning Northern Ireland*, issued in Belfast by Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom and Prime Minister John Bruton of Ireland. Mr. Ouellet also welcomed *A Framework for Accountable Government in Northern Ireland* released concurrently in London.

"The New Framework for Agreement is far-reaching and even-handed in its proposals. I hope that all of the parties that have a direct stake in Northern Ireland's future will display the same courage and commitment to peace that the British and Irish governments have shown, and seize this opportunity for allinclusive negotiations," Mr. Ouellet said

The proposals offered for discussion in the documents respect the rights, values and aspirations of both traditions in Northern Ireland. The British and Irish governments have reaffirmed that any subsequent agreement that may emerge would be based on the principle of consent and subject to approval by popular referenda.

Mr. Ouellet underlined that Canada has long supported Anglo-Irish efforts to secure peace in Northern Ireland and continues to encourage dialogue and reconciliation between the two traditions.

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