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## CANADA WELCOMES CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT IN NICARAGUA

The Right Honourable Joe Clark, Secretary of State for External Affairs, today welcomed the ceasefire agreement reached on March 23 between the Nicaraguan government and the contra resistance. "This is a positive step toward fulfilling the objectives of the Central American peace plan, and offers hope for peace in the region", said Mr. Clark.

Under the terms of the agreement, the two sides have agreed to a sixty day ceasefire during which a permanent truce will be negotiated. Canada has long advocated a negotiated settlement to the conflict and congratulates both parties for the flexibility that has been shown in the talks. "I encourage the two sides to continue to be flexible and pursue peace in the next phase of the dialogue, to ensure a firm and lasting settlement", said Mr. Clark.

The agreement is to be verified by a team led by Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo of Nicaragua and Joao Baena Soares, Secretary General of the Organization of American States. Details regarding other possible participants are unknown at this time. Although Canada has not been approached, Mr. Clark reiterated Canada's willingness to cooperate with Central American governments in support of these peace efforts.

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