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QUELLET TO TRAVEL TO ASIA

Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet will travel to Japan, Korea, Thailand, China and Hong Kong, from July 18 to August 2.

On July 18, Mr. Ouellet will arrive in Tokyo where he will meet with the new Japanese Prime Minister, Tomiichi Murayama and other cabinet ministers. Mr. Ouellet will also address the Canada-Japan Society.

On July 21, just days before the first summit between the leaders of the two Koreas, Mr. Ouellet will travel to South Korea. In Seoul, he will discuss bilateral, trade and regional security issues with Foreign Minister Han Sung Joo, and will meet with the President and senior officials. On July 23, Mr. Ouellet will travel to Panmunjom to tour the demilitarized zone between South and North Korea.

On July 24, Mr. Ouellet will travel to Bangkok, Thailand, where he will lead the Canadian delegation at meetings hosted by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). On July 25, the foreign ministers of the six ASEAN countries (Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand) will meet with the foreign ministers of Canada, Australia, China, Russia, the United States, Korea, Japan, Laos, New Zealand, Papua-New Guinea, Vietnam and the European Union in the first session of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). This multilateral meeting will focus exclusively on regional security issues; this year's theme is confidence-building measures for the Asia-Pacific region.

The ARF will be followed by the ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference (PMC) on July 26 and 27. The PMC brings together ASEAN foreign ministers and their seven "Dialogue Partners" (Canada, Australia, Korea, Japan, New Zealand, the United States and the European Union) for a discussion of regional and international political and economic issues.

Mr. Ouellet will travel to China on July 28. In Beijing he will hold talks with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Qian Qichen. He will also sign an agreement on environmental co-operation and a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty.