



No. 159

July 28, 1992

CANADA TO PARTICIPATE IN SPECIAL MEETING ON REFUGEES FROM THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Barbara McDougall, today announced that Ambassador Gerald E. Shannon will represent Canada at a special meeting of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) tomorrow in Geneva. The purpose of this one-day meeting is to examine the immediate humanitarian needs of the victims of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia and to intensify the search for a lasting solution to the plight of the refugees. Ambassador Shannon is Canada's Permanent Representative to the Office of the United Nations in Geneva.

"Canadians are appalled by the situation in the former Yugoslavia," said Mrs. McDougall. "We support the aim of the conference, which is to alleviate the human suffering in the short term. But treating the symptoms will not cure the problems at the root of the conflict. We must also do everything in our power to find a political solution."

The Minister added that Canada is committed to participating fully in international efforts to deal with the refugee problem and to find a just and durable solution to the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. Canada has provided over 1,200 peacekeeping personnel and ceasefire monitors to the UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in the area. Canada has also contributed \$5.25 million to international appeals for humanitarian assistance for the victims of the conflict. In addition, a Canadian Armed Forces Hercules C-130 transport airplane has conducted more than 30 relief flights to Sarajevo. In the past 12 months, Canada has extended the visas of approximately 15,000 citizens of the former Yugoslavia who had entered our country as temporary visitors.