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# news release

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## **CANADA URGES ALL PARTIES IN SOUTH AFRICA TO PARTICIPATE IN ELECTIONS**

Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet today called on all political parties in South Africa to work constructively toward peaceful democratic change.

"Canada urges all parties in South Africa to participate in the elections, and to ensure that all South Africans have the opportunity to exercise their democratic rights freely and peacefully. Political leaders must understand that the promotion of a particular interest or point of view is best undertaken from within the electoral process," said Mr. Ouellet.

Mr. Ouellet, who chairs the Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers on Southern Africa, stressed that a peaceful democratic transition is important for the whole Southern Africa region. He expressed concern at reports that some political parties plan to boycott and disrupt the upcoming elections. Canada believes the April elections are the first step in building post-apartheid South Africa, and will continue to support South Africans' efforts to develop a more equitable and stable society.

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