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RATIFICATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION AGAINST THE TAKING OF HOSTAGES

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, announced today the ratification by Canada of the United Nations International Convention Against the Taking of Hostages. Canada deposited its instrument of ratification at the UN headquarters in New York on December 4, 1985. The convention was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 17, 1979 and opened for signature on December 18, 1979. Canada signed in 1980 and has today proclaimed into force amendments to the Criminal Code which make ratification of this Convention possible.

Canada attaches great importance to all measures aimed at the prevention and elimination of all acts of terrorism including hostage-taking. The present Convention will apply to hostage-taking incidents involving an international component. It will facilitate the prevention of acts of hostage-taking and the prosecution and punishment of alleged perpetrators of such acts. It obliges states that are parties to the Convention to make hostage-taking an offence punishable by severe penalties. It also requires the extradition or prosecution of offenders found on their territories. Twenty-nine states, including Canada, are now parties to the Convention which entered into force on June 3, 1983.