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NORAD AGREEMENT RENEWAL

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, Dr. Mark MacGuigan, and the Minister of National Defence, Gilles Lamontagne, today signed an Exchange of Notes with the Secretary of State of the United States, Alexander Haig, constituting an Agreement between the Governments of Canada and the United States of America to continue their cooperation in the air defence of North America through the North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD) for a further five years. The Notes were tabled today in the House of Commons by the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

The five-year term of the renewal will allow for effective long-term planning toward the achievement of necessary modernization and modification of NORAD surveillance systems for the defence of North America. The change of name of the Command to "North American Aerospace Defence Command" and related changes in the text of the Agreement more accurately reflect Canadian participation in the Command's ongoing activities, including space surveillance and warning.

The decision to renew the NORAD Agreement was taken by the Canadian Government following a review of the various factors involved and after taking into account the comments and recommendations made by the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence in its report to the House of Commons submitted on December 19, 1980, following a series of hearings on the question.

The Government has concluded that it is in Canada's interest to cooperate with the United States on questions of North American defence both as a means of dealing with mutual security problems and as a contribution to the security of the NATO area, which includes North America. A credible deterrent and defence against Soviet long-range bombers continues to be needed and the most efficient and cost-effective way to provide the capability required is to continue the air defence command arrangements provided for in the NORAD Agreement.

--- The texts of the Notes exchanged today are attached.