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OFFICIAL VISIT TO CANADA BY NATO SECRETARY-GENERAL WILLY CLAES

Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet today announced that the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Willy Claes, will pay an official visit to Canada from March 1 to 3. This will be Mr. Claes' first official visit to Canada since his appointment as Secretary-General of NATO in September 1994.

"We are very pleased to receive Mr. Claes in Canada. This will be an opportunity to reaffirm Canada's staunch commitment to NATO and to discuss with Mr. Claes the evolution of the Alliance in light of the changes that have occurred in Europe," Mr. Ouellet said.

In addition to his talks in Ottawa with Mr. Ouellet, on Thursday March 2, Mr. Claes will meet with Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, the Minister of National Defence, David Collette, the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Bill Graham, and senior Canadian officials. Discussions will cover the evolution of the Alliance, its response to new European and global realities, the management of crises, NATO expansion and Canada's role within the Alliance.

Mr. Claes will be in Toronto on Friday, March 3, for meetings at the Canadian Forces Command and Staff College and the University of Toronto. He will also be the guest speaker at a luncheon organized by the Atlantic Council of Canada, the Empire Club and the Canadian Club.

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