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McDOUGALL CHAIRS COMMONWEALTH COMMITTEE ON SOUTHERN AFRICA IN NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 13-14

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Barbara McDougall, announced today that she will chair a meeting of the Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers on Southern Africa, in New Delhi, September 13-14.

"My colleagues and I will review the Commonwealth's role in support of peaceful change in South Africa," said Mrs. McDougall, "and we will be looking at the range of measures, including sanctions, that are available to see such change accomplished as soon as possible."

Mrs. McDougall noted that there have been remarkable developments in South Africa since the last meeting of Commonwealth Foreign Ministers. The repeal of the pillars of apartheid, the review of security legislation, and progress on the release of political prisoners and return of exiles have paved the way for the formal launch of constitutional negotiations. But violence still has the potential to abort the fragile dialogue which has been launched in South Africa.

The Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers on Southern Africa, established at the Heads of Government Meeting in Vancouver in 1989, is chaired by Canada and includes the Foreign Ministers of Australia, Guyana, India, Malaysia, Nigeria, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The Foreign Ministers will report on their conclusions and make recommendations for further action to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Harare, October 16-22.

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