



No. 108

May 21, 1992

## CANADA ESTABLISHES DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH FOUR COUNTRIES OF THE FORMER SOVIET UNION

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Barbara McDougall, today announced that Canada has established diplomatic relations with Belarus, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

"We welcome these new states to the community of nations, and look forward to co-operating with them in the United Nations, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) and the North Atlantic Co-operation Council," said Mrs. McDougall. "Canada is committed to helping each of them make the transition to democracy and a market economy."

The Minister noted that these countries have assured Canada that they will comply with existing arms control and disarmament agreements, adhere to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as non-nuclear weapons states, and fulfil their CSCE undertakings, particularly regarding full respect for human rights and the protection of minorities.

Relations were formally opened by exchange of diplomatic notes in Moscow. The Canadian Ambassador to Russia will be accredited to all four countries.

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