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CANADA WELCOMES ETHIOPIAN PEACE TALKS

The Minister for External Relations and International Development, the Honourable Monique Landry, said today that Canada welcomes upcoming peace talks between the Ethiopian government and major insurgent groups, and has offered diplomatic assistance to the parties involved.

The peace talks, which are scheduled to begin May 20 in London, U.K., are being organized by the Government of the United States and will be chaired by Mr. Herman Cohen, the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs.

The Minister said that the Canadian government has been actively promoting such a peace initiative in its contacts both with senior Ethiopian government officials and with representatives of opposition groups.

"Canada considers these talks crucial because the cycle of underdevelopment and famine cannot be broken without an end to the civil conflict," stated Mrs. Landry.

Since 1981, Canada has provided some \$470 million in total assistance to Ethiopia. This year alone, Canada has donated \$36.6 million in emergency relief supplies and has worked with other donors and international agencies to ensure passage of this relief.

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