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THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
ANNOUNCES DECISION TO SELL THE DEPARTMENT'S  
DEBENTURES IN THE ABERDEEN MARINA CLUB,  
HONG KONG

The Secretary of State for External Affairs announced today that he has instructed his Department to sell as soon as practicable 34 transferable debentures in the Aberdeen Marina Club acquired for employees of the Commission for Canada in Hong Kong and their families.

The memberships were purchased last year under the Department's Recreational Hardship Support Program. This program was set up on the finding of the 1981 Royal Commission on the Conditions of the Foreign Service that measures were needed to provide recreational outlets for Government of Canada employees and their families stationed in difficult environments abroad.

Late last month, the Auditor General questioned the procedures that led the Department to acquire the Aberdeen Marina Club memberships. He did not question the need for family recreational outlets for federal employees living in the expensive urban environment of Hong Kong.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs noted that the President of the Treasury Board had indicated, as a result of his own review, that

"a) the Recreational Hardship Support Program itself is sound in principle;

b) the Department of External Affairs acted within the terms of its Treasury Board authority in approving the Hong Kong transaction;