

# News Release

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## OUELLET CONGRATULATES RENÉ PRÉVAL, HAITI'S NEXT PRESIDENT

Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet today congratulated Mr. René Préval on his election as the next President of the Republic of Haiti. Mr. Préval will take office on February 7, 1996.

"The presidential elections of December 17 are a landmark in Haitian democracy. For the first time, a Haitian president has democratically succeeded another president who was also elected in accordance with the existing constitution," said Mr. Ouellet.

The Minister underscored the key role played by outgoing President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in establishing a system of democratic government in Haiti.

"President Aristide has defended democracy and the rule of law in Haiti ever since he took the leadership of the movement opposing the Duvalierist dictatorship in the early 1980s. I am pleased that the man who is preparing to succeed him has been engaged in the same struggles to affirm the dignity of the Haitian people. He can count, as did his predecessor, on the complete co-operation of Canada," added Mr. Ouellet.

About 30 Canadians took part in the mission prepared by the Organization of American States (OAS) to monitor the December 17 vote. The OAS observed that the vote took place in an orderly, disciplined manner, without serious incidents, and that the Haitian people were able to freely exercise their right to vote.

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For further information, media representatives may contact:

Media Relations Office  
Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade  
(613) 995-1874



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