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PANAMA

"I am very disappointed that, despite its best efforts, the special mission of the Organization of American States (OAS) has been unable to help bring about a negotiated settlement of the political crisis in Panama. Canada gave its support to an OAS declaration July 20 which called for a transfer of power in Panama on September 1, in keeping with constitutional requirements, and urged the holding of free elections as soon as possible", said the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark.

The Canadian Government strongly endorsed the efforts of the OAS to bring diplomatic efforts to bear to help resolve the tragic situation in Panama. Following the aborted elections of May 7, Canada condemned the betrayal of the democratic aspirations of the Panamanian people, and took the decision to limit official contacts with the present government.

"At a time when the great majority of Latin American countries have set themselves firmly on the path of democratic development, Panama's military leaders have chosen the opposite course. General Noriega, by his actions, is isolating himself and his country from his neighbours and from the rest of the democratic world. Canada hopes that the constructive efforts of the OAS to bring about an acceptable solution to the Panama problem will continue", said Mr. Clark.

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Secretary of State
for
External Affairs

Secrétaire d'État
aux
Affaires extérieures

Canada