



news release

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CANADA TO SEND ELECTORAL OBSERVERS TO RUSSIA

Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet today announced that Canada is sending a team of electoral observers to Russia to monitor the December 12 parliamentary elections and constitutional referendum.

"President Boris Yeltsin has committed himself to free and fair balloting for a new parliament and a new constitution, and we are pleased that he has invited the international community to witness the process," said Mr. Ouellet.

The team is headed by veteran Liberal MP Warren Allmand. It includes Senator Earl Hastings, Bloc Québécois MP Osvaldo Nunez, and a range of Canadian academics, former diplomats and elections experts.

Most team members depart Canada for Russia on December 3. They will join an advance party of five Canadian experts, which has already begun the mission's work. Three independent specialists and representatives of Elections Yukon and Elections Canada have been in Russia for the past two weeks, monitoring logistical arrangements, preparations for the vote and adherence to a democratic electoral process. The electoral mission will present its findings to the Minister of Foreign Affairs upon its return.

- 30 -

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