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# news release

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## QUELLET WELCOMES DECISION TO RESUME GUATEMALAN PEACE TALKS

Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet today welcomed the decision by the Government of Guatemala and the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unit (URNG) to resume peace negotiations. The last round of peace talks broke down in May 1993.

"This is a significant and encouraging step after an eight-month break in peace talks. Canada praises the flexibility shown by both parties in reaching this agreement and fully appreciates the difficulty and complexity of the issues to be negotiated," said Mr. Ouellet.

The accord was reached this week in Mexico City after a three-day meeting of the two sides. It calls for the resumption of formal negotiations during the second half of February and commits the parties to reach a firm and lasting peace agreement at the earliest opportunity. The parties have requested that the United Nations play a central role both as moderator and to verify that all parties fulfil their commitments.

Christine Stewart, Secretary of State, Latin America and Africa, urged both parties to maintain their efforts to bring to an end the three-decade conflict which has resulted in untold suffering and human rights abuses in Guatemala.

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