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NOTES FOR AN ADDRESS BY THE HONOURABLE LLOYD AXWORTHY, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AT YORK UNIVERSITY

"BUILDING PEACE TO LAST: ESTABLISHING A CANADIAN PEACEBUILDING INITIATIVE"

**NORTH YORK, Ontario
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Introduction

Thank you for inviting me to meet with you today. As you know, one of the commitments this government made was to open up the formulation of Canadian foreign policy to a much wider range of participants, including the academic world. That is why I have chosen to speak to you here today on what is, I believe, one of the most significant challenges we face in the post-Cold War world: building sustainable peace in countries prone to recurring cycles of violence.

In speaking with you today, I would like to outline my own thinking on why "peacebuilding" is necessary and what it means in concrete terms, recognizing that it is an evolving concept. And I would like to share with you a new initiative that we are taking as part of Canada's response to the challenge that peacebuilding poses.

New Era, New Needs

The end of the Cold War was hailed by some as the harbinger of global peace. But what it has brought us is not peace — but a new kind of war. The current crisis in the Great Lakes region of Africa is the most recent in a series of tragic internal conflicts with profound regional implications. Too many countries are caught in the trap of seemingly unstoppable repetitions of conflict within their own borders, the cost of which is measured not only in the millions of lives extinguished, but also in the despair of those who survive. In an increasingly globalized world, these crises directly or indirectly affect us all.

In Cambodia, El Salvador, the Middle East, Haiti, Rwanda and Bosnia, the international community has learned the hard way that traditional approaches to conflict resolution are not enough. There is still a clear role for the solutions that characterized the Cold War era. Canada's path-breaking contribution to international peace and security — the concept of peacekeeping — remains a key tool. But it is not the tool for preventing ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia, nor for ending hate propaganda in Rwanda, nor for getting the Palestinian Authority on its feet before the possibility of Middle East peace slips through our fingers.

The conflicts we face now are no longer purely military in nature, nor will they be resolved by military solutions alone. They occur within states, rather than between them, but they tend to spill over into surrounding regions. And they are characterized by long-term cycles of violence in the absence of the capacity to sustain a peaceful society.

The Response: Peacebuilding

The international community has begun to rethink the whole concept of security in the light of these developments. Countries such as Norway and Holland have been in the forefront of this effort, as has