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CANADA SENDS OBSERVERS TO ALBANIAN ELECTIONS

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, today announced that a Canadian delegation will observe the legislative elections to be held in the People's Socialist Republic of Albania on March 31. The delegation consists of two members of Parliament and a senior official from Elections Canada: Mr. Geoff Scott, M.P., Mrs. Beth Phinney, M.P., and Mr. Ron Gould, Assistant Chief Electoral Officer.

"Canadians support the development of the new democratic process all over Eastern Europe," stated Mr. Clark. "The presence of the Canadian delegation, and of other international delegations, will encourage fairness in the Albanian electoral process and help give confidence to the Albanian people as they participate in this first democratic exercise." Mr. Clark emphasized the fact that the Albanian government has invited the international community to observe the elections.

These will be the first multiparty elections to be held in Albania since the Second World War. They became possible after the governing Communist Party relinquished its monopoly on power in December 1990. Albania's elections will be the latest in a series of multiparty elections held throughout Central and Eastern Europe over the last two years.

The Canadian observation team will join other similar groups from the United States, Denmark, Belgium and the Netherlands. The United Nations has provided a team of technical experts to assist Albania with the voting process.