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CANADA CONTRIBUTES \$13 MILLION TO RURAL HOUSING PROGRAM

SAN JOSE, COSTA RICA --- The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, signed today an agreement with the Government of Costa Rica which will inject an additional \$13.0 million into the Costa Rica-Canada Rural Housing Program.

The Costa Rica-Canada Rural Housing Program was conceived in 1983, when Costa Rica and Canada agreed to the establishment of two lines of credit for the provision of goods from Canada. These goods were sold in Costa Rica, and the revenues from sales were used to finance the construction of rural housing at low interest rates. These two lines of credit generated the equivalent of approximately \$11,000,000 in local currency. Some 440 homes have been delivered, and another 1,600 are in process. The agreement signed today will assign the revenues in local currency from a third line of credit to the Costa Rica-Canada Rural Housing Program. These revenues will amount to the equivalent in local currency of \$13,000,000 and will permit the financing of at least 3,000 homes.

During the past five years, Canada has tripled its bilateral aid to Central America. Costa Rica has received more than \$44 million in direct aid from Canada.