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CANADA WELCOMES START II TREATY

External Affairs Minister Barbara McDougall today welcomed the signing of the START II nuclear arms reduction treaty by U.S. President George Bush and Russian President Boris Yeltsin. The Minister called upon other countries of the former Soviet Union with nuclear weapons on their territory to honour their arms reduction commitments. In particular, she urged these states to fully implement their undertakings with respect to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

"The START II Treaty represents the single greatest reduction in destructive power ever mandated by an arms control treaty," said Mrs. McDougall. "Canada is delighted that the new spirit of co-operation between former adversaries has resulted in such a tangible gain for world security."

The Treaty calls for massive reductions in the nuclear arsenals of the U.S. and the Russian Federation, with each side destroying roughly 70 per cent of its strategic arsenal. Heavy, land-based, multiple warhead missiles, generally regarded as the most destabilizing, will be eliminated entirely by both parties.

"START II constitutes a significant boost for the nuclear non-proliferation process. Its signing takes on even greater significance as we move toward the NPT review and extension conference in 1995," the Minister added.

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