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CLARK TO ATTEND CSCE CONFERENCE AND NATO MEETING

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, today announced that he will participate on June 5 and 6 in the Conference on the Human Dimension of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) in Copenhagen and on June 7 and 8 in the Ministerial Session of the North Atlantic Council in Turnberry, Scotland.

"Respect for human rights is a central element of the CSCE process and is fundamental to the achievement of confidence and stability," stated Mr. Clark. "The Copenhagen meeting offers an excellent opportunity to make solid commitments to shared democratic ideals and values."

The Minister added that Canada is looking for substantial progress in Copenhagen on issues such as rule of law, free elections, representative institutions, minority rights and building and strengthening democratic institutions. He said that Canada will sponsor forward-looking proposals in these and other key areas.

While in Copenhagen, the Foreign Ministers of the 35 participating states will also launch preparations for a CSCE summit to be held in Paris later this year.

Mr. Clark stated that the June 7 and 8 Ministerial Session of the North Atlantic Council in Turnberry will help to lay the groundwork for major decisions at the NATO Summit, which will be held on July 5 and 6 in London.

"As I noted in a recent speech at Humber College in Toronto, the primary Canadian bridge to Europe has been our contribution to NATO," said Mr. Clark. "It is critical therefore for Canada to play a central role as NATO transforms itself to adapt to new European realities."

At the Turnberry meeting, Ministers will assess the status of democratic reform in Eastern Europe. They will also seek ways to improve political consultation and will attempt to define a new NATO vision for security in Europe.

Dynamic participation in both NATO and CSCE is central to the Canadian government's policy of playing an active role in the evolution of a "New Europe" based on peace, stability, and prosperity.