

News Release

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CANADIANS SERVE AS UN AND OAS OBSERVERS OF NICARAGUAN ELECTIONS

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, today announced that eight Canadians will serve as observers of the Nicaraguan general elections scheduled for February 25, 1990. Canada will provide these observers in response to requests by the United Nations and the Organization of American States (OAS).

A team of five Canadian observers will arrive in Managua by February 18 to assume duties with the the UN Observer Mission (ONUVEN). The three OAS observers will arrive in Managua by February 21. After special training and orientation, the Canadian observers will be stationed on election day at some of the nearly 4,000 polling stations in Nicaragua. The ONUVEN and OAS observer groups have been monitoring the Nicaraguan electoral process since August 1989.

Mr. Clark expressed his appreciation to the Canadian observers for undertaking the important task of verifying that the elections are free and fair. "The presence of Canadian election observers will contribute to the strengthening of democratic institutions in Central America," said the Minister. "This is one of the key objectives of Canada's foreign policy in the region."

In accordance with UN and OAS guidelines, observers have been chosen according to criteria of impartiality, knowledge of Spanish and familiarity with Central America. Some have had previous experience observing elections in Central America and elsewhere.

A list of the Canadian election observers is attached.