



No. 030

February 16, 1989.

SOVIET WITHDRAWAL FROM AFGHANISTAN

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, has expressed satisfaction at reports that the last Soviet troops have been withdrawn from Afghanistan. "Their departure", he said, "fulfills a commitment made by the Soviet Union as part of the Geneva Accords of April 1988".

"The Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan", Mr. Clark said, "brings to an end a tragic chapter in that country's history. We must now look to the future and to the early establishment of a representative government as a pre-condition to a durable solution for the country and its people. Only in that way will Afghanistan be able to work out its own destiny free from outside intervention. Mr. Clark added that the withdrawal of soviet troupes from Afghanistan will bring forward an atmosphere of greater trust and confidence in improving East/West relations."

Mr. Clark also noted that, in response to last year's appeal of the United Nations Secretary-General, Canada has pledged a total of \$22 million over the next two years to support the Afghanistan repatriation and rehabilitation program. This sum is in addition to the \$19 million provided each year to Afghan refugees in Pakistan.

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Secretary of State
for
External Affairs

Secrétaire d'État
aux
Affaires extérieures