



No. 105

May 20, 1992

McDOUGALL DEMANDS END OF VIOLENCE IN THAILAND

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Barbara McDougall today called on Prime Minister Suchinda to halt the violent response to demonstrations and to exert control over the military and any so-called "attack squads" that are reportedly terrorizing Bangkok.

"I have instructed my Ambassador in Thailand to seek an immediate meeting with Prime Minister Suchinda to stress that the crisis is due to a failure to respect the democratic aspirations of the Thai people. It simply cannot be blamed on "communists" or other artificial scapegoats," said Mrs. McDougall. "Canada and the international community will expect an independent inquiry into the excessive use of military force against unarmed civilians."

The Minister announced a moratorium on all Canadian military sales to Thailand and a suspension of defence exchanges. Advice to exporters and instructions to Customs authorities are being issued today. This will also result in the cancellation of the visit to Thailand of the Associate Minister for National Defence, which had been planned for early July.

"Canada will continue to support those in Thailand working to achieve democratic change," said Mrs. McDougall. "Our current actions must focus on the military authorities who are trying to prevent that change."

Mrs. McDougall said Canada continues to monitor events in Thailand very closely and will consider other actions as the situation becomes clearer.

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