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McDOUGALL TO ATTEND CO-ORDINATING CONFERENCE ON ASSISTANCE TO THE COUNTRIES OF THE FORMER U.S.S.R

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Barbara McDougall, today announced that she will attend the Washington Co-ordinating Conference on assistance to the countries of the former U.S.S.R., January 22-23.

"The coming months will be crucial for the countries which have emerged from the former Soviet Union," said Mrs. McDougall. "Canada and other leading industrialized countries are already providing substantial assistance. This conference should help to mobilize a wider group of countries in this effort and ensure that our assistance is delivered in a co-ordinated and effective manner."

The meeting will bring together foreign ministers and senior officials from over 40 countries, as well as representatives of the United Nations, NATO, the European Community and international financial organizations, to discuss the urgent needs of these new states.

Working groups on five key sectors -- food, medicine, shelter, energy and technical assistance -- will prepare plans of action to be presented to the full conference on January 23. Mrs. McDougall co-chairs the working group on food, with her counterparts from Great Britain and Germany.

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