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CANADIAN PARTICIPATION IN UNITED NATIONS

OBSERVER GROUP IN AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, today announced that Canada has agreed to a request by the Secretary General of the United Nations to provide five military officers, for a period of twelve months, to the observer group being set up to facilitate the implementation of the Geneva agreements signed April 14 by representatives of Pakistan, Afghanistan, the United States and the Soviet Union.

The group, which for administrative purposes will be known as the UN Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP), will consist of about 50 military officers who will be under the command of General Rauli Helmenin of Finland. The other contributors to UNGOMAP are expected to be Austria, Denmark, Fiji, Finland, Ghana, Ireland, Nepal, Poland and Sweden. The observer group is expected to begin operation on May 2.

In making this announcement, Mr. Clark noted that Canada had a long-standing tradition of contributing to UN efforts to resolve international conflicts. Canada had consistently called for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan and participation in UNGOMAP provided concrete expression of Canada's commitment to achieving that objective. He said that the Geneva agreements would not have been concluded without the efforts of the Secretary General and his personal representative, Mr. Diego Cordovez, and observed that UNGOMAP provided an opportunity for the United Nations to continue to play a role in facilitating a resolution to a situation to which the international community attached such great importance.

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Secretary of State
for
External Affairs

Secrétaire d'État
aux
Affaires extérieures