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# news release

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## QUELLET WELCOMES RUSSIAN SIGNING OF NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH NATO

Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet today warmly welcomed Russia's signature of NATO's Partnership for Peace program. He said that Russia's membership in the program is a significant step in the development of new post-Cold War security relations, which will increase mutual confidence and openness in the interest of all European states.

"Closer co-operation between NATO and Russia is a key element for enhanced security and stability in Europe. With this signature, NATO and Russia are opening a new chapter in the security of the Euro-Atlantic region," said Mr. Ouellet.

The program, launched at last January's NATO Summit in Brussels, enables members of NATO and its partners to engage in practical co-operation including joint peacekeeping exercises and an expanded program of political and military relations. Russia is the 21st country to join the Partnership for Peace program.

In addition, Canada has long advocated that Partnership for Peace should be complemented by a broad strategic dialogue, between the Alliance and Russia, which recognizes the importance of that country in terms of European security. Canada, therefore, welcomes the agreement reached between NATO and Russia to pursue such a dialogue.

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