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CLARK MARKS FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF NELSON MANDELA'S RELEASE

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, today hailed the first anniversary of African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela's unconditional release from prison on February 11, 1990. The Minister noted with satisfaction the reforms made in South Africa in the past 12 months and encouraged further progress in the year to come.

"In the past year we have seen the African National Congress suspend its armed struggle in favour of a seat at the negotiating table. We have seen the South African Government -- in addition to releasing Nelson Mandela -- unban political organizations, lift the State of Emergency, and undertake to repeal the remaining legislative pillars of apartheid. We have also seen important progress in the forging of unity among significant black political organizations. Though much remains to be done, momentous steps have been taken on the road to a non-racial democratic South Africa."

"These few months represent an extraordinary record of personal achievement for Mr. Mandela. The long struggle by the anti-apartheid movement to secure his release has been well rewarded. As the pre-eminent leader in the struggle against apartheid, he has demonstrated his profound commitment to building a democratic South Africa through peaceful negotiation."

Mr. Clark noted that the significant progress made thus far could only be attributed to the willingness of the South African people, led by Mr. Mandela and President de Klerk, to work together to bring about peaceful change, and commended Mr. Mandela on his recent call for an all-party

conference to prepare for constitutional negotiations. He said that negotiations represent the only path to justice and peace for all South Africans and expressed the hope that the remaining political prisoners would soon be released and political exiles allowed to return, and that formal negotiations would begin shortly.

"I know the people of Canada would wish to join me in extending greetings to Nelson Mandela on this day and wishing him and other South African leaders the wisdom, strength and courage in the next 12 months to build a new, just South Africa."

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