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LANDRY TO REPRESENT CANADA AT NAMIBIA'S INDEPENDENCE

The Minister for External Relations and International Development, the Honourable Monique Landry, announced today that she will lead the Canadian delegation to the celebrations marking Namibia's independence from South Africa on March 21.

The delegation will include Parliamentarians of all three parties -- Walter McLean (PC), Bob Speller (Lib) and Howard McCurdy (NDP) -- as well as the noted jazz pianist Oliver Jones who has been invited to give several solo performances in Windhoek.

"Namibia's long-awaited independence is a major step forward against apartheid and for the effective promotion of human rights and democracy", stated Mrs. Landry. "With the added warmth of Commonwealth ties, Canada will continue to do all it can to assist Namibia in the pursuit of reconciliation and development".

Earlier today, Commonwealth Secretary General Ramphal announced that Namibia will become at independence the Commonwealth's fiftieth member. His statement, which fulfills the invitation extended by Heads of Government last October, was made on the occasion of Commonwealth Day.

In Namibia March 19-21, Mrs. Landry will meet with several of the incoming Namibian Ministers to discuss various aspects of the new bilateral relationship including development assistance. She will also meet visiting dignitaries from Africa and elsewhere.

Canada played a leading role in negotiating and implementing Namibia's independence process, both directly and through the United Nations. During the past year Canada provided over 350 military and police personnel to the UN Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG), over 60 election supervisors and

.../2

technical experts as well as 4000 ballot boxes to support the election of the Constituent Assembly, and over \$3.5 million in aid for development and refugee repatriation. The Constituent Assembly recently adopted unanimously an exemplary constitution which provides for effective human-rights guarantees and a multi-party democracy.

On her way to Namibia, Mrs. Landry will stop briefly in Rome where she will hold discussions with Italian government officials who have been coordinating the on-going peace talks between the Government of Ethiopia and the Tigrean People's Liberation Front. Canada has over the past year been actively assisting various parties in furthering peace talks in Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa.

On Friday Mrs. Landry travels to Addis Ababa where she will meet government leaders to convey personally the Government of Canada's concern that a peaceful solution to the conflict be arrived at quickly so that the food aid can move freely to victims of the drought and famine.

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has already provided \$26 million worth of food aid and relief assistance to Ethiopia in fiscal year 1989/90 to cope with the current famine. Canadians have also contributed privately to many non-governmental organizations that are working to prevent starvation there.

For further information, media representatives should contact:

Pierre Chantelois
Press Secretary
(819) 994-6161