



news release

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CANADA TO EXPAND PARTICIPATION IN UN OBSERVER GROUP IN EL SALVADOR

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Barbara McDougall, and the Minister of National Defence, the Honourable Marcel Masse, today announced that Canada will increase its United Nations' contingent in El Salvador.

The move is part of an overall expansion of the United Nations Observer Group in El Salvador (ONUSAL), following the signing of a formal ceasefire between the government forces and the Frente Farabundo Marti para la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN) on January 16.

"Canada has played a key role in the Central American peace process," said Mrs. McDougall. "The historic peace accords signed in Mexico represent a major step toward regional security. I am pleased that Canada can assist El Salvador in its quest for a lasting peace."

"The Canadian Forces have always been in the forefront of UN efforts to restore and maintain peace," said Mr. Masse. "We are prepared, as always, to respond to calls for this type of assistance and hope that this increased commitment will effectively contribute to peace in El Salvador."

As part of its mandate, the expanded ONUSAL mission will oversee the demobilization and demilitarization process. It will continue to monitor the human rights situation in El Salvador, and observe preparations for national elections in 1994.

Canada already has two military observers with ONUSAL. Twenty-four additional Canadian personnel will join the mission for a

period of up to one year. Canada will also provide 30 observers, for a period of approximately six weeks, beginning the end of January.

- 30 -

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