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CANADA HAILS REPEAL OF SEPARATE AMENITIES ACT IN SOUTH AFRICA

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, today hailed the repeal of the *Separate Amenities Act* in South Africa as an important step forward and a tangible sign of the South African government's intention to dismantle apartheid.

For the past 37 years, the *Separate Amenities Act* effectively prevented South Africans of different races from sharing public facilities like beaches, parks, libraries and swimming pools. The Act not only imposed racial segregation on community services but specifically provided that the facilities provided for the non-white majority could be of inferior quality to those provided to whites.

Mr. Clark paid tribute to the thousands of South Africans who have opposed the *Separate Amenities Act* as a violation of basic human rights. From the Defiance Campaigns of the Sixties to the present day, many have gone to jail, and some South Africans have even lost their lives, to express their opposition to this pernicious legislation.

In welcoming the repeal of this pillar of apartheid, Mr. Clark also called on the South African government to ensure that this important reform will not be undermined at the local level through the enactment

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of restrictions at the municipal level or through intimidation. The South African government's public commitment to end apartheid should be accompanied by vigorous action to ensure that all citizens of South Africa are given full access, as a basic right, to public facilities throughout the country.

"We sincerely hope that the next session of Parliament in South Africa will see substantial progress in the repeal of other discriminatory legislation, notably the Group Areas and the Land Acts which impose residential segregation. The repeal of these pillars of apartheid are the litmus test of the government's commitment to peaceful democratic change in South Africa," said Mr. Clark.

For more information, media may contact:

Media Relations Office
External Affairs and International Trade Canada
(613) 995-1874