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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON IMPROVING THE UN'S RAPID REACTION CAPABILITY

Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet and Defence Minister David Collenette will participate in an international conference in Montebello, Quebec, April 7-8.

Experts from Canada and some 30 UN member countries will also participate in this event, along with senior advisers from the UN Secretariat. The meeting will be co-chaired by Sir Brian Urquhart, formerly Under-Secretary General for Special Political Affairs at the United Nations and now scholar-in-residence at the Ford Foundation in New York, and Professor John Polanyi, Nobel Laureate in Chemistry and Professor at the University of Toronto.

The conference, which follows a meeting of the International Consultative Group, will examine the observations arising from February's national workshop in Cornwallis, Nova Scotia, and that of mid-March in Quebec City. Participants will exchange views on short-, medium- and long-term initiatives to help the UN strengthen its rapid reaction capability in times of crisis.

"I am impressed with the quality and expertise of the participants. Their input is crucial to the success of the Canadian study currently under way on this subject," commented Minister Ouellet, who will address the conference on Saturday at noon.

"Canadian troops are innovators in the field of peacekeeping; so it is entirely logical that Canada should play a role in developing new options for the UN's rapid reaction capability," said Mr. Collenette, who will address the conference Friday evening.

Recommendations formulated during the Montebello meeting will subsequently be analyzed in the context of the final report of the Canadian study, which is scheduled to be tabled before the

United Nations General Assembly and submitted to the Secretary-General in September 1995, during the Organization's 50th anniversary.

- 30 -

For further information or to obtain a background document, media representatives may contact:

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