

# News Release

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## STRATEGY TO COUNTER SOUTH AFRICAN PROPAGANDA AND CENSORSHIP:

### CANADIAN ACTION PLAN

TORONTO - The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, made public today the Canadian Action Plan (attached) to help implement the Strategy to Counter South African Propaganda and Censorship.

In committing \$1 million to implement the Plan, the Secretary of State for External Affairs expressed satisfaction with the positive reaction of his colleagues, who have committed themselves to developing national action plans as well.

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Secretary of State  
for  
External Affairs

Secrétaire d'État  
aux  
Affaires extérieures

Canada

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Canada is prepared immediately to begin implementing elements of the strategy. To do so, \$1 million will be spent between now and the CHOGM in Kuala Lumpur in 1989.

The maze of South African government restrictions and regulations governing the media are increasingly severe. Ensuring that newspaper copy does not affront these restrictions is a burdensome and uncertain task. Canada therefore proposes to contribute to a legal advisory fund to help the alternative press cope with government-imposed impediments to accurate reporting.

Individual journalists similarly can easily run afoul of censorship laws. A group has recently been formed to help them. Canada will provide funding to this group.

The Canadian embassy in Pretoria will engage in more effective public affairs activities, including an enhanced media relations program, identifying target audiences and reaching them with news and information from abroad.

Groups of concerned citizens, in Canada and elsewhere, have worked diligently to blunt the effects of South African propaganda and to reduce the effectiveness of the South African government's censorship. The Canadian government will work more closely with these groups and provide support for their work.

There have been two major international conferences in recent years where leading representatives of the media discussed shared problems flowing from South African propaganda and censorship. These have proved valuable and should be repeated periodically. Canada plans therefore to convene a major conference at a Canadian school of journalism focussing on South African propaganda and censorship and the risks and challenges it poses to the international media.

Key figures in the sport and entertainment industries have been invaluable in focussing attention on apartheid and engaging public opinion. The Canadian government will seek to further mobilize the sport and entertainment industries in increasing public awareness.

The alternative press in South Africa suffers from a shortage of trained professionals. The need for freelance journalists is growing. Few blacks, and few women, can be found in the profession of journalism. Canada will therefore establish a scholarship program to provide young South Africans with the opportunity to receive an education that will prepare them for careers in journalism.

It requires both skill and courage to work as a true journalist in South Africa today. One way to encourage these brave people is to give them special recognition. Canada has therefore proposed the creation (and undertakes to provide a portion of the funding) of a Commonwealth Journalism Award to be presented to an outstanding South African journalist recognizing his/her courage and achievement in maintaining independent standards in the face of government censorship and propaganda. If other sponsors agree, such an award could be presented by the Secretary General at each CHOGM. The winners of this award would also be powerful symbols of our determination to help South Africans bring about peaceful change.

South African editors have told us that experience outside their own country is invaluable for their journalists. It may also help shield them from a somewhat capricious autocracy by providing a network of media contacts abroad. Canada will award at least two fellowships for South African journalists to provide them with the opportunity to work in Canada for a period of 3 to 12 months. The first of these will be announced in September.

My department's existing speakers program provides Canadian and foreign speakers on a host of topics to interested Canadians. This program will be augmented to provide Canadian journalists, editors, broadcasters, news producers and journalism students with an opportunity to hear informed speakers discuss South African issues with particular emphasis on propaganda and censorship and the role of the media.

A key to implementation in Canada will be an advisory board of leading citizens, from different walks of life, who share with us an abhorrence for apartheid. They will provide advice and guidance as we move forward with our program, and will help animate public involvement.