



No. 75

March 26, 1993

McDOUGALL COMMENTS ON DEVELOPMENTS IN BOSNIA-HERCEGOVINA

External Affairs Minister Barbara McDougall today welcomed the agreement by the government of Bosnia-Herzegovina to the terms of the Vance/Owen peace plan and called on Bosnian Serbs to accept the proposals or face the consequences.

"It is essential that all parties be committed to the earliest possible negotiated settlement based on the Vance/Owen proposals. I am pleased that the Bosnian government has recognized that and agreed to the plan," said Mrs. McDougall.

The Minister paid tribute to President Izetbegovic's courage to take this important decision on behalf of peace. She called on him to continue this commitment to the negotiating process.

Mrs. McDougall strongly criticized the representatives of the Serbian community of Bosnia for not accepting the terms of the proposed plan.

"The international community has indicated on many occasions that the proposals of Lord Owen and Cyrus Vance constitute the best arrangement available to restore peace and to provide for a viable new political framework for Bosnia-Herzegovina. We have also clearly indicated that those who are unwilling to compromise will have to bear the consequences," said Mrs. McDougall.

The Minister stated that Canada would support any new measures, including additional sanctions that the United Nations Security Council might apply, to bring pressure on the Bosnian Serb leadership and the government in Belgrade to further the cause of peace.

Mrs. McDougall expressed outrage at the humanitarian situation in Eastern Bosnia, where Bosnian Serb troops continue to use the misery of civilians to achieve their military aims.

"Canada condemns in the strongest possible terms the Serb attack on the airfield in Srebrenica that left two Canadian peacekeepers injured. We demand that the humanitarian effort be permitted to resume," concluded the Minister.

- 30 -

For further information, media representatives may contact:

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