



communiqué

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CANADA SIGNS AGREEMENT WITH MULTINATIONAL FORCE

The Right Honourable Joe Clark, Secretary of State for External Affairs, and Mr. Peter D. Constable, Director-General of the Multinational Force and Observers, (MFO) today signed an Exchange of Notes establishing the terms and conditions of Canada's participation in the Sinai-based peacekeeping force.

In response to requests from Egypt and Israel, the Prime Minister had announced on April 11 the decision in principle to provide a contingent to replace the Australian helicopter unit which is withdrawing from the MFO in April 1986.

Under the terms of the Agreement concluded today, Canada will provide up to 140 personnel and nine unarmed CH 135 helicopters to the MFO.

The Canadian contingent will assume responsibility for its mission on 31 March 1986. Canada has agreed to serve in the MFO for a period of two years, and thereafter may terminate its commitment by providing twelve months written notice.

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The Multinational Force and Observers was established in 1981 to monitor security provisions of the 1979 Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty. In addition to Australia, other countries which provide contingents to the MFO include Britain, Colombia, Fiji, France, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Uruguay and the U.S.A. The Force Commander is Lieutenant General E. Ingebrigtsen of Norway.

Canadian participation in the MFO will contribute to the reinforcement of the peace agreement between Egypt and Israel. The treaty between the two countries, based as it is on the principle established in Security Council resolution 242 of exchanging land for peace, stands as an example of what can be achieved in the region when the political will exists. Canada remains committed to assist in the search for peace and stability in the Middle East.