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CLARK WELCOMES PARLIAMENTARY OBSERVERS' REPORT ON NAMIBIA

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, welcomed yesterday's tabling of a report on Namibia by an all-party group of four Members of Parliament. Led by the Honourable Walter McLean (Waterloo) and including Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg-Transcona), Ms. Marie Gibeau (Bourassa) and Mr. Bob Speller (Haldimand-Norfolk), the group visited Namibia last month at Mr. Clark's invitation to observe voter registration and the campaign for early-November elections under United Nations supervision.

"This report a month before the Namibian elections is timely, constructive and forward-looking" stated Mr. Clark. "It will be very helpful to the Government in assessing developments there at this crucial time". The Minister noted that, while agreement has now been reached on an election law satisfactory to the United Nations, the recent demobilization by South African authorities of the feared "Koevoet" counterinsurgency force still remains incomplete and must meet United Nations requirements.

Looking beyond the upcoming elections, Mr. Clark expressed the hope that the constitution to be adopted by the elected Constituent Assembly would fully reflect the Constitutional Principles agreed by all parties and published by the United Nations, including an effective Bill of Human Rights. He added that Canada, having contributed to Namibia's transition process in practical ways, would remain active in addressing the country's development needs after independence.

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Secretary of State
for
External Affairs

Secrétaire d'État
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The Parliamentary observers' report includes the following highlights:

- high levels of voter registration constituted a "remarkable achievement".
- election procedures should focus on rapid counting, a secret ballot and a campaign to build public confidence in the latter.
- to minimize intimidation, "Koevoet", although slated for disbandment under Security Council Resolutions 435 and 640, should first be fully confined to base and effectively monitored until the election, then disbanded and retrained.
- an eventual Constitution should be determined by the Assembly without South African interference and should incorporate the 1982 Constitutional Principles agreed by all parties.
- Canada should assist Namibia's post-independence development and encourage investment in that country.

Canada has already assisted the transition process by providing peacekeeping forces, refugee aid, diplomatic observer presence, ballot boxes, technical expertise and before long further support to the United Nations in the form of police monitors and election supervisors.

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