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CANADA CONGRATULATES HAITI

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, and the Minister for External Relations and International Development, the Honourable Monique Landry, have expressed the satisfaction of the Government of Canada at the peaceful conduct of the elections of December 16 in Haiti.

"I join all Canadians in congratulating the Haitian people, as well as the interim government and the Provisional Electoral Council on the orderly way in which this election day passed. I am confident that all Haitians will redouble their efforts to put in place democratic institutions which will guarantee the protection of their fundamental rights," stated Mr. Clark.

Madame Landry drew attention to the role played by international observers and advisers in these elections. "We wish to express our appreciation for the activities of the international organizations, reflecting the keen interest of the international community in the situation in Haiti. Canada was pleased to contribute to the observer missions of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the UN, and to assist in the democratic transition and the organization of the elections." Madame Landry went on to say that Canada would enter into discussions with the new government to determine how it can contribute in helping to consolidate the democratic process in Haiti.

Unofficial results to date suggest that Jean-Bertrand Aristide has taken a commanding lead. Should he be confirmed as President-elect, he is assured the support of the Government of Canada.

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