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BEATTY WELCOMES PROGRESS IN SOUTH AFRICAN NEGOTIATIONS

External Affairs Minister Perrin Beatty today welcomed the decision by the multiparty Negotiating Forum in South Africa that the first non-racial elections would be held on April 27, 1994.

The parties are now working on the formation of a multi-racial Transitional Executive Council, as well as the structure and principles for the government that would be elected in 1994.

"The setting of an election date is a key milestone in the constitutional negotiations in South Africa" said Mr. Beatty. "We urge all parties to move quickly, and in a spirit of compromise, to agree on the outstanding issues. Once there is agreement, or should parties call for it, Canada will respond positively and lift economic sanctions."

Canadian sanctions against South Africa will be lifted in accordance with a Commonwealth policy agreed at the last Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in October 1991. The policy was recommended to the CHOGM by the Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers on Southern Africa, which has been chaired by Canada since it was established in 1987.

Once sanctions are lifted, the Canadian government will undertake a number of initiatives to encourage increased trade and investment between the two countries. These will include new trade development programs and the posting of a trade commissioner to South Africa.

"Canada looks forward to turning the page and developing strong relations on all fronts with the new South Africa," said Mr. Beatty.

Some further sanctions would remain in place until a multiparty call for their lifting. The United Nation arms embargo would remain until a post-apartheid South African government is firmly established, with full democratic control and accountability.

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