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CANADIAN PARTICIPATION IN UNEF

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES EXTÉRIEURES

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Mitchell Sharp wishes to confirm that the Secretary-General of the United Nations has presented an official request to Canada to provide a contingent for service with the United Nations Emergency Force being organized in response to the Security Council resolution 340 of October 25. The Secretary-General's request stated that this contingent should be organized to provide the logistic component of the force including in particular air support, transport, communications and related logistic facilities.

As I have frequently stated, both in the House of Commons and outside it, the Government's position is that we would be prepared to contribute toward the creation of such a force provided it is under the auspices of the United Nations provided our participation is acceptable to all concerned, and provided we can play a useful role.

I have assured the Secretary-General that we will give his request the most serious and urgent consideration. Toward this end a team of officials from the Department of External Affairs and the Department of National Defence has joined officials of the Canadian Delegation to the United Nations and is now consulting with the United Nations Secretariat about further details of the contribution requested from Canada, the number of personnel and equipment that might be required, the terms of reference, etc. When this information has been received and considered the Government will be able to inform the Secretary-General of its decision.

I have, of course, been in touch with the Prime Minister and I will be consulting the Minister of National Defence and other Cabinet Ministers tomorrow. The situation is urgent and I would expect that the Government will be able to reach its decision within a short period of time.

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