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## NEWS RELEASE

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### CANADA ANNOUNCES MEASURES IN SUPPORT OF THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Barbara McDougall, and the Minister for External Relations and International Development, the Honourable Monique Landry, today announced the establishment of two funds to provide support for development-related aspects of the Middle East Peace Process. Canada will again be hosting the Multilateral Working Group on Refugees in Ottawa November 11-12, 1992. Canada hosted the first meeting, also in Ottawa, last May.

"Canada continues to be an active participant in the Middle East Peace Process through our hosting the Multilateral Working Group on Refugees," stated Mrs. McDougall. "While the bilateral talks are the focal point of the peace process, the multilaterals are playing a valuable complementary role to those talks."

The two funds have been established by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). They consist of the Expert/Advisory Services Fund and the Canadian Fund for Dialogue and Development.

"I am confident that these two funds will be useful tools to help improve the lot of those people tragically displaced as a result of the Arab-Israeli conflict," said Mrs. Landry.

The Expert/Advisory Services Fund, with an initial budget of \$1 million, will be managed by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). Its role is to provide support to the multilateral process, particularly the Working Groups on Refugees and Water Resources.

The Canadian Fund for Dialogue and Development (CFDD) has been created as a parallel measure to encourage and support conferences, seminars and workshops promoting regional dialogue on development issues in the Middle East. Canadian diplomatic missions in the region will administer the CFDD with an initial budget of \$500,000.

The Refugee Working Group is one of five Multilateral Working Groups established last January in Moscow to complement the bilateral peace negotiations. The bilateral talks, established in Madrid in October 1991, focus on direct negotiations between Israel and its neighbours. The Multilateral Working Groups involve some 35 countries and focus on a wide variety of regional issues whose solution requires concerted international effort.

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