



news release

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CANADIANS TO INSPECT CZECHOSLOVAK MILITARY EXERCISE

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, and the Minister of National Defence, the Honourable Bill McKnight, today announced that Canada has addressed a request to the Government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic to inspect a military exercise. Under the terms of the Document of the Stockholm Conference, agreed to by Canada and by Czechoslovakia in 1986, each participating State has the right to conduct inspections on the territory of any other participating State, within the zone of application for the confidence- and security-building measures described in the document.

Four inspectors from the Canadian Forces will travel to Czechoslovakia on June 14, 1989 to conduct a 48-hour inspection of a military activity notified by Czechoslovakia for June 12-16, 1989. This training activity will be a command and staff exercise. The tactical setting for the field portion of the exercise will be at divisional level with a partial deployment of troops.

Mr. McKnight announced that the inspection team will be led by Colonel Ken C. Mitchell of Montreal, who is the Commanding Officer of 3 Canadian Forces Technical Services Agency in Toronto. The team will fly in a Canadian Forces aircraft to Czechoslovakia on Wednesday, June 14, from Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Lahr in the Federal Republic of Germany. There, in accordance with the Stockholm Document, the team will inspect the Czechoslovakian military operations, using host nation vehicles and aircraft.

At the completion of the 48-hour period, the team will return to CFB Lahr, where it will write a report which will be forwarded to all nations who are signatories to the Stockholm Accord.

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This inspection constitutes the first time Canada has availed itself of the rights granted under the Stockholm Document. It demonstrates Canada's firm commitment to the confidence- and security-building measures adopted in the Stockholm Document, and our conviction that by their implementation, these measures serve to strengthen confidence in Europe, giving expression to the duty of States to refrain from the use of force.

NOTICE

There will be a media opportunity with the team members at CFB Lahr, Federal Republic of Germany, after their return from Czechoslovakia late on Friday, June 16. For further details, contact the DND Office of Information Lahr at (011) 49-7821-206113, or the National Defence Headquarters Media Liaison Office at (613) 996-2353.

CANADIAN INSPECTION OF A CZECHOSLOVAK MILITARY ACTIVITY

Background

Confidence-building in Europe began with the signing of the Helsinki Final Act in 1975. This agreement included a number of relatively modest confidence-building measures which, inter alia, encouraged nations voluntarily to notify each other of their plans to conduct certain large military activities. These measures were designed to dispel suspicion and mistrust about military capabilities and intentions.

A second major step in the direction of confidence-building was taken during the Stockholm Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe. This conference concluded in 1986 with the agreement of all 35 Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) participating countries regarding a requirement for the circulation of annual military calendars to other CSCE participants, the prior notification of military activities involving 13,000 ground troops or more, the observation of military exercises involving over 17,000 troops, and challenge on-site inspections. The provisions of the Stockholm Document have been in effect since January, 1987 and since that time some 35 observable exercises and 18 challenge on-site inspections have taken place. These inspections have proved their value in building mutual confidence. The increased contacts created by the observation and inspection of exercises have also contributed to better reciprocal understanding.

These achievements represent an encouraging advance. However, there is a need for still further steps towards our goal of reducing tension by clarifying military capabilities and intentions and fostering co-operation. In this regard, a mandate for a new set of negotiations to build upon and expand the work of the Stockholm Conference in developing further confidence- and security-building measures, was concluded in January, 1989 in the context of the CSCE Follow-Up meeting, in Vienna. In this negotiation, which opened on March 9, 1989 the members of the North Atlantic Alliance seek to create greater transparency of military organizations and activities, as well as to improve contacts and communications between participating states. Prospects for the new negotiations are positive. There is general agreement that the successful implementation of the provisions of the Stockholm Document over the last two years bodes well for an attempt to expand these measures further.

Canada is an active participant in the CSBM process: our representatives contributed to the successful development of the Stockholm Document; Canada has fulfilled its reporting obligations under the agreement; we have sent

observers to all military activities to which we have been invited; Canadian troops have been among those observed and inspected. Canada has not yet, however, chosen to exercise its right to carry out a challenge inspection.

Numerous inspections by member states of NATO and the Warsaw Pact have taken place over the past two and a half years, firmly establishing the principle that on-site inspections can be politically uncontentious and make a positive contribution to the transparency of military activity in Europe.

Under the challenge inspection provision of the Stockholm Document a reply from the receiving state is required within 24 hours of the receipt of an inspection request. Within 36 hours after the issuance of the request, the inspection team will be permitted to enter the territory of the receiving state. The inspection team consists of no more than 4 inspectors who are allowed 48 hours to complete their task. The receiving state supplies both ground and air transportation, as well as communications facilities to the team during the inspection. Board and lodging are also provided to the team. After the inspection is completed, a report is prepared by the inspecting state that is distributed to all CSCE participating states.

It was agreed by Ministers earlier this year that given Canada's interest and recognized expertise in the field of verification, that this country could contribute constructively to this on-going confidence-building process by conducting a challenge inspection under the provisions of the Stockholm Document. On June 12th, Canada addressed a request to the Government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic to inspect a military exercise, notified under the terms of the Stockholm Document. The inspection of this military activity is intended to reinforce Canada's commitment to the measures of the Stockholm Document. It is our conviction that by their implementation, these measures serve to strengthen confidence in Europe, giving expression to the duty of states to refrain from the use of force. It is incumbent upon Canada to continue to play an active role in negotiations on confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs), working to achieve improved openness regarding military forces and their activities. Canada's experience in the field of verification, augmented by this inspection, will allow us to better contribute to the design and implementation of the means to verify future agreements.