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MONIQUE LANDRY PARTICIPATES IN UNITED NATIONS
AFRICAN MID-TERM REVIEW

UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK -- External Relations and International Development Minister Monique Landry today addressed the United Nations General Assembly, representing Canada at the mid-term review of the UN Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery.

"As Minister responsible for Canada's development assistance program and for Canada's relations with Africa, I wish, on behalf of my Government and of the people of Canada, to reaffirm our long-term commitment to Africa," said Mrs. Landry.

The UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar issued the mid-term report of the five-year UN Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery, first launched in May 1986.

Although a number of African countries are currently engaged in economic reforms and adjustment efforts, the overall economic situation in Africa continues to be very difficult, Mrs. Landry added. The debt burden, overpopulation, and environmental degradation are among the most pressing issues requiring attention, she observed.

After underlining the courageous efforts made by Africans themselves to reverse their current economic trends, Mrs. Landry noted the strong supporting effort of the international community. This includes the International Monetary Fund's new enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility, the Paris Club's extended repayment periods, a substantial increase of the African Development Fund and Official Development Assistance (ODA) debt forgiveness by a number of donors, including Canada. (In 1987, Canada indicated its intention to forgive approximately \$600 million in ODA debts of sub-saharan African countries). In addition, bilateral donors, including Canada have pledged \$6 billion in support of structural adjustment activities in Africa.

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Minister for
External Relations and
International Development

Ministre des
Relations extérieures et du
développement international

"In 1987-88, Canada provided \$1.1 billion in assistance to Africa via bilateral and multilateral channels," said the Minister. "We are increasing to 45% the share of our bilateral assistance committed to Africa."

Mrs. Landry emphasized that the primary purpose of Canadian official development assistance remains to help the poorest countries and people of the world. Structural adjustment must contribute to sustainable development.

"Africa will remain a high priority for Canada," said Mrs. Landry. "We will continue to seek and to support new and imaginative solutions to Africa's problems."