

News Release

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McDOUGALL EXPRESSES CONCERN ABOUT SERBIAN ELECTIONS

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Barbara McDougall, today issued the following statement on the former Yugoslavia.

The elections of December 20, 1992 for the Presidency of Serbia and for the federal parliament and republican assemblies in Serbia and Montenegro provided an opportunity for change. Regrettably, the conditions in which these elections were held were seriously flawed. Reports from the team of international observers, which included four Canadians, found numerous and grave irregularities during the campaign and during the voting.

There is considerable doubt whether the outcome is a free expression of the will of the electorate. There is no indication that the destructive policies that have led to much of the present crisis will change.

Canada continues to believe strongly that attempts to stop the violence and suffering, and to ensure it does not spread further, require the full engagement of the United Nations. Action by the Security Council is the clearest sign of the world's commitment to act effectively to stop the tragedy in Bosnia and Hercegovina, and prevent its spread. The election results have underlined this.

Canada has welcomed the Council's recent decision to tighten economic sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro. We are applying these new measures strictly. We are exploring with our allies what additional measures should be taken.

Affaires extérieures et
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Canada

To ensure the perpetrators of atrocities are called to justice, Canada is taking the lead in the establishment of an ad hoc tribunal to try those responsible for war crimes. We now have solid international support for this Canadian initiative and are discussing with our allies how to put the tribunal in place.

Canada has informed the UN Secretary General that it will strongly support a decision by the Security Council to enforce the no-fly zone over Bosnia-Herzegovina. In doing so we are fully conscious of the UN's concern for the impact of this on the ongoing humanitarian relief effort.

The Government supports a negotiated political settlement as the best way of achieving a durable solution but if there is no change of heart by the authorities in Belgrade, they run the risk of complete isolation from the international community.

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For further information, media representatives may contact:

Media Relations Office
External Affairs and International Trade Canada
(613) 995-1874