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CLARK REPORTS ON CANADA'S FIRST YEAR IN THE OAS

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, tabled today in the House of Commons a report on Canada's first year in the Organization of American States (OAS). The report describes Canadian accomplishments on such issues as OAS reform, democratic development, human rights, the environment and drugs.

"We tabled this report so that Parliament and all Canadians will know what we have done in the OAS and will be more familiar with the active role we have played on major issues, as well as how our membership in the OAS fits into Canada's overall policy for Latin America," stated Mr. Clark.

Highlights of Canada's first year were its proposal to establish a Unit for the Promotion of Democracy, which was adopted unanimously at the General Assembly in June 1990, and Canadian participation in OAS election observer missions in Nicaragua in February 1990 and in Haiti last December.

Canadian objectives at the OAS have been shaped by a determination to be an active, independent and effective member of the organization, as recommended by the Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade. Other activities Canada has undertaken to promote our objectives include:

- election to the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission in June 1990;
- active membership in the Working Group for strengthening the OAS in the area of human rights;

- participation in the OAS Consultative Group on the Inter-American System;
- joining the Inter-American Commission on Women;
- contributing to technical co-operation through the OAS Voluntary Fund;
- creation of the Canada-Latin America Forum to address issues that affect Canadian interests in Latin America; and
- active membership on the special Working Group on Environmental Protection.

Copies of the report are available through the Media Relations Office, External Affairs and International Trade Canada.

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