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CANADA TO PARTICIPATE IN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CAMBODIA

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, announced today that he will lead the Canadian delegation to the opening session of the International Conference on Cambodia which opens in Paris Sunday, 30 July 1989.

The purpose of the Conference will be to develop international understandings and mechanisms to enable progress towards the restoration of peace in Cambodia. This will require the total withdrawal of all foreign troops.

The Conference will be chaired jointly by France and Indonesia. In addition to the Cambodian factions, Vietnam and Laos, participants will include the five permanent members of the UN Security Council (Great Britain, France, the USA, the USSR and China), the six ASEAN countries (Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines and Brunei), Canada, Australia, Japan, India and the current and next chairmen of the Non-Aligned Movement (Zimbabwe and Yugoslavia). The Secretary General of the UN has also been invited.

In April of this year, Canada was asked by Vietnam to serve on an international peacekeeping body to supervise the withdrawal of its troops from Cambodia. At that time, Canada had advised Vietnam that we would consider participation only if key conditions could be met. These include: the full support of all parties to the dispute; a clear mandate and a limited duration of involvement; manageable resource implications; and, most important, evidence that this is part of an effective and comprehensive solution to the Cambodian problem.

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Secretary of State
for
External Affairs

Secrétaire d'État
aux
Affaires extérieures

Canada

It is particularly important that there be a clear authority to whom any peacekeeping commission would report. In Canada's view, that authority should be vested in the UN. Additionally, the financial aspects of any peacekeeping force must be satisfactorily resolved.

While welcoming the opportunity to participate in the Conference, Mr. Clark said, "Canada had lengthy experience in peacekeeping in Indochina from 1954 to 1973. Unfortunately, in the latter years this was not a happy experience because of inherent flaws in the mandates of the commissions concerned. Canada has also settled 130,000 refugees from Indochina. It is my hope that the Conference will make significant progress towards finding a durable settlement. I believe Canada can provide an important contribution in this effort."