



news release

Date April 11, 1989.
For release

No. 082

NAMIBIA: ENHANCED CANADIAN DEPLOYMENTS

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, and the Minister of National Defence, the Honourable Bill McKnight, today welcomed the suspension of hostilities in northern Namibia, and confirmed that Canada is speeding up deployment of its remaining logistical support contribution. They also announced that the Canadian Armed Forces would provide two C-130 Hercules transport aircraft for 30 days to the United Nations Transition Assistance Group for Namibia (UNTAG).

"Canada looks with hope to the resumption of the Namibian independence process," Mr. Clark said. "It is time to put behind us a week of tragedy, and ensure as soon as possible conditions in which Namibians can determine their future democratically." SWAPO has agreed to withdraw from Namibia, and Angola, Cuba and South Africa have outlined a plan to facilitate this withdrawal through border assembly points monitored by UNTAG. While the continuing potential for difficulty should not be underestimated, the assembly points have been set up and UNTAG urgently strengthened and deployed to meet the additional demand.

Mr. McKnight commented that "in view of the urgency of the situation, in addition to speeding up our own deployments, we are glad to provide additional internal airlift capacity for a period of 30 days. The C-130 Hercules will be utilized under United Nations command for internal deployments of personnel and equipment." Mr. Clark added that "Canada has asked the United Nations to direct similar requests to other countries which, we hope, will give them favourable consideration. We will review the duration of this additional airlift contribution in consultation with the United Nations."

.../2

The remaining 203 Canadian troops for UNTAG will depart Ottawa and Trenton on Wednesday, April 12. Most will arrive in Namibia the next day, and all by Friday, April 14. Approximately one-third will immediately take up their previously-assigned logistical support duties. The remainder will receive a variety of temporary assignments in keeping with UNTAG deployment activities and likely will take up their previously-assigned tasks in late April. Prior to their departure, the Associate Minister of National Defence, the Honourable Mary Collins, visited the troops yesterday at Canadian Forces Base Pettawawa.

Canada remains committed to the implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 435 and 632, which is the objective of the withdrawal plan and which provides for UN-supervised elections in Namibia in November. Namibians outside the country, including SWAPO personnel, are to start returning peacefully next month to participate in the elections through a UN High Commissioner for Refugees program to which Canada has contributed some \$2 million.