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MCDUGALL PROFOUNDLY CONCERNED ABOUT ESCALATION OF VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Barbara McDougall, today expressed profound concern about the escalating violence in South Africa.

"This violence is not only tragic in itself, but it has the potential to abort the fragile dialogue which has been launched in South Africa. The long-term consequences for South Africa of a breakdown in the negotiations could be calamitous," she stated.

The Minister said that there has been encouraging progress in recent days in discussions between the South African government and the African National Congress on bringing an end to the violence. She expressed the hope that these discussions would continue, and that all parties in South Africa would redouble their efforts to bring this violence to an end.

Mrs. McDougall pointed out that the ultimate responsibility for peace and stability in the townships lies with the South African government. "President de Klerk and his colleagues must take decisive action to ensure that the security forces uphold the rule of law without fear or favour."

"The Canadian government and the Commonwealth have consistently declared that the only path to democracy, peace and security in South Africa is through negotiations. We trust that the major obstacles to the launch of formal negotiations on a new constitution for South Africa, notably the release of prisoners, the return of exiles, and the

repeal of security legislation, will soon be resolved. We urge all parties to enter into good faith negotiations as soon as possible."

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