



news release

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CANADA'S HUMANITARIAN GESTURE TO COMMEMORATE WORLD RED CROSS DAY

The Government of Canada announced today the "humanitarian gesture" it has made to commemorate World Red Cross Day. Countries throughout the world will be making similar gestures on this day as part of commemorative ceremonies to mark the 125th anniversary of the founding of the international Red Cross movement.

As part of its humanitarian gesture, the Government of Canada, through the Canadian International Development Agency, is providing \$150,000 to the Canadian Red Cross to send a five person Canadian medical team to Pakistan. This team will provide critically needed medical and surgical assistance to the International Committee of the Red Cross' field hospitals for Afghans in Pakistan.

The Government of Canada, through the Department of Communications, has also granted permission to the Canadian Red Cross to install and operate a radio station in Canada to transmit and receive emergency messages. Once operational, this radio station will form part of the autonomous, international telecommunications system established by the International Red Cross to expedite global relief efforts.

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Finally, the Government announced its intention to table shortly in Parliament the legislation that would allow Canada to ratify the 1977 Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, two important humanitarian treaties that afford greater protection to civilians and soldiers during times of armed conflict.

The Canadian humanitarian gesture represents an expression of Canada's continued commitment to the principles and ideals for which the Red Cross has come to be known. It also represents an expression of gratitude by the people of Canada for the outstanding humanitarian work the Red Cross movement performs.

For further information please contact:

Valerie Sirois
Canadian International Development Agency
953-6060

Robert Peck
Media Relations
Department of External Affairs
995-1874