



No. 191

October 5, 1993

CANADA RATIFIES PROTOCOLS STRENGTHENING THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES

External Affairs Minister Perrin Beatty announced that Canada has ratified the Washington and Managua protocols to amend the Charter of the Organization of American States (OAS).

"The protection and promotion of representative democracy have been among Canada's top priorities since joining the OAS. Canada's prompt ratification of these protocols demonstrates our commitment to democracy and to the eradication of poverty in this hemisphere, as well as to OAS reform," Mr. Beatty said.

The instruments of ratification were deposited on October 4 with the General Secretariat of the OAS in Washington, by Canada's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the OAS, Brian Dickson.

The Protocol of Washington, adopted by the OAS in December 1992, seeks to strengthen the protection and promotion of democracy in the hemisphere. It allows for the suspension of member states in cases where democratically elected governments have been overthrown by force. The Protocol also identifies extreme poverty as a threat to democracy and makes its eradication an OAS priority.

The Protocol of Managua, adopted in June 1993, addresses the problem of extreme poverty. More concretely, it is designed to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the OAS system of technical assistance by merging the two existing OAS technical assistance councils into a new Inter-American Council for Integral Development.

The OAS, established in Bogota in 1948, is the oldest regional organization in the world. With 35 member states, its mandate is to strengthen peace and security, to promote and consolidate representative democracy, and to contribute to the settlement of political, juridical and economic problems in the hemisphere. It also seeks to promote the

economic, social and cultural development of member states. Canada has been a full and active member of the OAS since joining the organization in January 1990.

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