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SECRETARY OF STATE STEWART TO TRAVEL TO EL SALVADOR, GUATEMALA AND MEXICO

Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet today announced that Secretary of State (Latin America and Africa) Christine Stewart will travel to El Salvador, Guatemala and Mexico April 6-12.

"Mrs. Stewart's visit underscores Canada's ongoing commitment to peace and democratic development in Central America," said Mr. Ouellet.

"I look forward this visit at a time when Salvadorans are engaged in their first democratic elections, and both sides of the conflict in Guatemala have signed an accord on human rights," Mrs. Stewart added.

Mrs. Stewart will visit San Salvador April 6 and 7, where she will meet with President Alfredo Cristiani, officials of the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL) and representatives of non-governmental human rights and development groups. She will also visit Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) projects in El Salvador, including a community enterprise project in a barrio of San Salvador.

On April 8, she will travel to Guatemala City, where she will hold talks with President Ramiro de León Carpio and Human Rights Ombudsman Mario García LaGuardia. Mrs. Stewart applauded the March 29 signing of a human rights accord between the Guatemalan government and the National Revolutionary Unity of Guatemala (URNG), but deplored the subsequent assassination April 3 of Eduardo Epaminondas Gonzalez Dubon, president of Guatemala's Constitutional Court, saying that she would discuss these important developments with President de León and others.

Mrs. Stewart will attend the annual meeting of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) in Guadalajara, Mexico, on April 11-12. Canada is an active member of the IDB, which is the largest source of development financing for Latin American countries.

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