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Canada Sends Witnesses to Burmese By-Elections

March 28, 2012 - Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird today issued the following statement:

"Canada is pleased to send Senator Consiglio Di Nino and Parliamentary Secretary Deepak Obhrai to Burma to witness and report on the parliamentary by-elections of April 1.

"These by-elections are the latest tests of commitments made by Burmese authorities to real reforms. Canada and the world are watching.

"Burma invited each member and dialogue partner of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to send a small delegation to witness the voting. While this does not allow for comprehensive monitoring, Canada is keen to have eyes and ears on the ground at this important moment.

"As I said in meetings during my recent visit to the country, we expect these elections to be free and fair. We will base future actions on whether we see progress in developing a more open, just and prosperous society.

"Our witnesses will carry with them the hopes of all Canadians that these elections are conducted peacefully and produce results reflecting the will of the Burmese people. I look forward to receiving their report upon their return to Canada."

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