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PRESS RELEASE

Mission Canada 2019 Welcomes Head of Mission Lloyd Axworthy

Kyiv, 14 March 2019

Mission Canada 2019 welcomes the appointment of the Honourable Lloyd Axworthy as Head of Mission who will work with Election Analysts, Long and Short Term Observers in Ukraine to assess the presidential election, scheduled to take place on March 31, 2019.

Canada's bilateral election observation mission has been on the ground in varying stages since January 22, 2019 monitoring all aspects of the election process and the preparations for the election. Mission Canada 2019 is neutral and impartial in its conduct and its findings.

"We look forward to welcoming the Honourable Lloyd Axworthy in Ukraine soon" – stated the Deputy Head of Mission, Olya Odynska-Grod. "He visited Ukraine several times before as Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs and he also served as an election observation mission delegate in 2014, so he is familiar with the context in which this election will take place".

The Honourable Lloyd Axworthy is an accomplished statesman and academic currently serving as the Chair of the World Refugee Council. He is one of Canada's leading voices on global migration and refugee protection.

In 1997, he was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for his work on banning anti-personnel land mines. The next year he won the North-South Prize awarded by the Council of Europe for his efforts in establishing the International Criminal Court and the Protocol on child soldiers. In 2015, the Honourable Lloyd Axworthy was promoted to Companion of the Order of Canada, the highest grade of the honour. He was presented with the Pearson Peace Medal by the Governor General of Canada in 2017.

"Having him as Head of Mission will further emphasize that our Election Observation Mission is an important example of Canada's commitment and support to Ukraine's democratic development" – said Olya Odynska-Grod.

A group of 50 long term observers - including 13 core team members and analysts - have been monitoring and assessing the electoral campaign and the preparations for the election in all 24 oblasts of Ukraine where voting will take place. 110 Short Term Observers will join them closer to election day to follow voting day procedures, counting and tabulation of results.

Mission Canada 2019 will publish its first Preliminary Statement of Findings the day after the election, Monday April 1, 2019 at a press conference in Kyiv.

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Background to CANADEM Election Observation

CANADEM has participated in over 130 missions in more than 40 countries, playing a crucial role in strengthening the democratic process globally. They have mobilized nearly 2000 election observers to Ukraine for 11 elections since 2004. CANADEM EOM operates in accordance with the “Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation”, adopted at the United Nations in 2005.