

\$8,000 per capita in direct benefit to status Indians on-reserve and Inuit. This is the largest per capita expenditure on indigenous people of any government in the world. The expenditures on indigenous people in Canada have been increasing consistently over the past decade. For example, in the current fiscal year 1990/91, the Department of Indian Affairs budget increased by 8 per cent even though overall government program expenditures fell. Moreover, the Indian and Inuit Affairs program has increased by some 60 per cent since 1984-85.

Seventy percent of federal programs for Indian communities are administered by the communities themselves, reflecting the Government's commitment to assist indigenous communities to take more control over their affairs, and to achieve forms of self-government within the Canadian federal system.

In line with this commitment, negotiations on community self-government, underway with over 160 indigenous communities, seek a new relationship between the federal government and indigenous communities. Governance, social and cultural programs, land titles and management, federal financing, administration of justice, and health are some of the areas which have been identified for negotiations.

The Canadian Aboriginal Economic Development program, with a budget of \$1.4 billion over five years, further reflects the government's commitment to help indigenous people achieve a greater degree of self-reliance. Since the program's initiation in November, 1989, 231 projects have been supported. About 50 percent of the 6,000 existing aboriginal business enterprises have been started within the last six years.

Indigenous culture is also a key element of autonomy for indigenous people. Programs on aboriginal culture and history have been instituted in the schools on Indian reserves across the country. Over half of indigenous students now take classes in their aboriginal languages. Recently the government of the Northwest Territories formally recognized the six indigenous languages of the territory as official languages, in addition to English and French. As well, all secondary school students in the Northwest Territories are required to learn one indigenous language.

There have been constitutional developments over the past year in Canada that have a bearing on Canada's aboriginal peoples. The province of Quebec was not a signatory to the patriation of Canada's Constitution in 1982. Subsequently, Quebec did not actively participate in the constitutional process including in the negotiations among the Prime Minister and other First Ministers and representatives of Canada's aboriginal peoples that took place on aboriginal issues over the 1983 to 1987 period. However, in April 1987, the Prime Minister and the ten provincial Premiers agreed on