

Canada at UN special session on Africa

Minister for External Relations Monique Vézina led the Canadian delegation to the special session of the United Nations General Assembly on the economic crisis in Africa, held in New York, May 27 to 31. This special meeting was convened by the General Assembly in response to a request made by the heads of state of the Organization for African Unity at their July 1985 meeting in Addis Ababa.



Mrs. Vézina addresses the UN special session on Africa.

In a speech to the special session on May 27, Mrs. Vézina announced a moratorium on official development assistance debt for African countries and a mechanism to make funds and technical expertise available to African communities.

The measures are in addition to the Africa 2000 initiative, a comprehensive series of steps the Canadian government will take to respond to the needs of African countries over the next 15 years, that was announced on May 6. (See *Canada Reports*, May 28, 1986.)

The moratorium is for an initial period of five years but Mrs. Vézina said this can be

extended in five-year segments to the year 2000. Debt from outstanding development assistance loans owed to Canada by sub-Saharan countries totals \$700 million and would involve a burden of \$250 million in repayments over the next 15 years.

The second measure is a proposal to create a new mechanism within the multilateral aid system. "Its role would be to make available to local communities, village councils and volunteer organizations in Africa, funds and technical expertise to help them to carry out projects of their own choosing to meet their needs in the fields of desertification, conservation of ground cover, and

food production," said Mrs. Vézina.

The United Nations Development Program has indicated its support in developing the details of such a facility for Africa. Once the new mechanism has been created, Mrs. Vézina said Canada is prepared to contribute \$20 million over five years.

In New York Mrs. Vézina held more than 17 bilateral meetings with African heads of delegation from various African countries. She also met with representatives of the African and Canadian non-governmental community who were at the UN special session as observers.

Canada-Zaire meeting

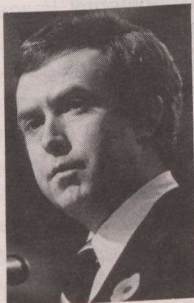
Following the UN special session, from June 2 to 4, the third session of the Canada-Zaire Bilateral Commission was held in Ottawa. The main outlines for the program of economic co-operation, economic interchange and trade between the two countries, as well as international questions were discussed.

At the conclusion of the meeting Mrs. Vézina announced the signing of a \$4.6-million agreement between Canada and Zaire, to develop agriculture in the Beni and Lubero territories in North-Kivu, a northeastern region of Zaire. Under the five-year project, financed by the Canadian International Development Agency, a supply and a wholesale marketing centre will be constructed and staff will be trained to operate the centre. A Canadian firm will provide the services and equipment necessary to construct and manage the centre, and will also be responsible for the training program.

Minister visits Ireland and the Philippines

Secretary of State for External Affairs Joe Clark is in the Philippines attending an annual ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference, being

held in Manila from June 26 to 28. Participants at the meeting include the foreign ministers of the six members of ASEAN (Brunei, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines), as well as the foreign ministers of ASEAN's dialogue



Joe Clark

country partners (Canada, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, and the European Community).

During the conference, the Canadian minister will have bilateral meetings with the

prime minister of New Zealand and the foreign ministers of Australia, Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand and the United States.

Following the ASEAN conference, Mr. Clark will make a bilateral visit to the Philippines from June 28 to July 2. He will meet with senior members of the Philippines government, including President Corazon Aquino and Vice-President and Minister of Foreign Affairs Salvador H. Laurel. He will also visit the island of Negros to view Canadian development projects.

Prior to his trip to the Philippines, Mr. Clark visited Ireland from June 20 to 23 where he participated in the dedication ceremony of the memorial to the victims of the Air India Flight 182 tragedy of last June 23. The monument was built by the governments of Canada, India and Ireland. Mr. Clark also met with Ireland's prime minister and foreign minister.

Solar power "lights" up

Canada's first commercial solar lighting system, opened on June 4 at the Victoria Park Place office complex in North York, Toronto. The occupants, Canadian Telecommunications Group, are now working under natural lighting channelled through specially designed "light" pipes that permit sunlight to enter and illuminate most of the office space.

The solar lighting system, patented as the Prism Light Guide, was developed by TIR System of Vancouver. The project was funded in part by Energy, Mines and Resources (EMR) Canada.

To capture the sunlight at the office complex, heliostats (mirrors) housed in a rooftop greenhouse follow the sun and deflect the rays through access holes in the floor into eight light pipes below. The heliostats are computer-controlled to follow the sun.