

CANADA-SENEGAL RELATIONS

Canada has maintained very good relations with Senegal since it achieved independence in 1960. These are based mainly on cooperation and questions related to La Francophonie, but they are now becoming more diversified and are encompassing various international issues, namely those related to North-South dialogue. Senegal generally defends moderate positions in the international forums, with the result that the delegations of both our countries tend to maintain very close contacts in order to work together in the conferences. Canada also enjoys an excellent reputation in Senegal owing to the democratic nature of its institutions, the fact that it has no colonial past and the quality of its development aid.

Senegal continues to be one of the best-known and most esteemed African countries among Canadians, on account of its social and political stability, its respect for human rights and its tradition of multipartite politics. Bilateral relations between our two countries have been enhanced by numerous high-level visits on both sides, including visits by former Prime Minister Trudeau in 1981, by former President Senghor in 1966, 1968, 1971, 1976 and 1978, and by President Diouf in 1983. Relations between the two countries have grown much closer in recent years, as shown by the Summit contacts, and also by numerous ministerial visits, our increased co-operative endeavours, and the common views we have expressed on a number of international questions, especially those related to Africa.

In 1986 alone, for example, a number of Senegalese ministers have visited Canada, including the ministers of Rural Development, Justice, Education, Trade and Equipment, and the President of the National Assembly. Former Minister for External Relations Monique Vézina participated in the January, 1986 third session of the Bilateral Commission in Dakar, and also met with President Diouf at the special UN session on Africa in New York last May. A parliamentary commission also visited Senegal in December 1986. These high-level meetings are enhanced by the presence in Canada of a Senegalese community numbering about 250, some 150 of whom are students, most in Quebec universities. The Canadian community in Senegal numbers about 400, a substantial group of whom are cooperants.

Senegal continues to be a country of concentrated development aid for Canada, and is thus eligible for all types of resource transfers. To date disbursements from Canada have