

and multilateral aids.

North/South  
relations

I might even say that in the 12 months I have been acting as adviser to the Prime Minister and to the Secretary of State for External Affairs on relations with French-speaking countries, a number of them told me that their interest in the Agency is directly related to that aspect of co-operation at the social, technical and economic levels, and a great many of them would be much less interested if the Agency were to restrict its activities solely to the defence and the renown of the French language. That is another way of saying that Canada was right to insist that the Agency be also directly involved in socio-economic co-operation in addition to its cultural vocation. Very recently the Agency has become the site for sectorial ministerial meetings. The first of those meetings was held in Luxembourg in 1977 for ministers of science and technology. The second took place in September 1980 in Paris, where justice ministers gathered and there I acted as representative of the Canadian government; similarly, there was a conference of agriculture ministers in March 1981 and I had the opportunity to attend as spokesman for my colleague who holds that portfolio. The ministers for cultural affairs will get together in Cotonou this coming September. Other ministerial meetings are scheduled for 1982 and the following years. Slowly but surely the ACTC is getting to be the foremost and privileged centre for French-speaking communities. One of the objectives of the Canadian government is to have the Agency regroup, under various forms, most of the activities of international French-speaking communities.

However, when we speak of international French-speaking communities we must be very careful not to see today's reality solely through the prism of language. Many of my counterparts whom I had the honour to meet during my various trips, and a great number of the participating countries which are full members of the Agency, told me that on several occasions. Several of those countries have barely 2 or 3 per cent of their people who speak French. It would therefore be a serious mistake to try to look at reality solely through the prism of language. To the extent that language will help us to communicate and draw closer together, we will extend, enrich and deepen those relations which should be developed and bear fruit in all areas.

On the other hand, it must be kept in mind that the international French-speaking community emerged from various private French-speaking associations, some of which go back to some 40 years. Most of them had a professional basis, such as the *Association internationale des parlementaires de langue française* (AIPLF), of which I have been appointed delegate for the Americas, or *l'Institut de droit d'expression française* (IDEF), which will hold its fourteenth convention in Montreal in September following the joint invitation of my colleague, the Minister of Justice of Canada, and the Quebec Minister of Justice. Others regrouped according to their common goals such as AUPELF, the Association of Partly or Fully Francophone Universities, which is to hold its convention both in Quebec City and Ottawa in September of this year, or CIRTEF, the International Council of Francophone Radio and Television Stations, which was created in 1978 at the suggestion of the Canadian government. CIRTEF comprises most of the francophone radio and television stations in the world.

The government of Canada of course provides financial assistance to a large number

---