

namely the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation, was created in 1970 in Niamey, Niger, Canada was among the founding states. We were one of the very first countries to seek political expression for non-governmental francophone institutions, and we have sought to make such expression a reality.

Canada has been participating actively in the activities and conferences of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation for more than ten years. But what actually is the Agency's role? I would say that it is first of all dedicated to cooperation for the development of mankind, or, more precisely, for developing the cultural and technical aspects of human resources. Moreover, this is the direction in which the Agency's programs have proceeded in recent years: specifically, toward the development of national languages and cultures, education and training of the sort provided by the Ecole internationale de Bordeaux; preservation of national heritage; technological and scientific exchanges; communication by means of books, cinema, audio-visual devices and records; and horizontal technical development, by the Special Development Program or the PSD. All the human development activities of the Agency have had a second objective in view: to stimulate exchanges, cultural dialogue and the formation of closer ties between the people of the francophone countries. In other words, communication between francophones - individuals or States - has been both the means and the end of the Agency's vocation. There is now a broad consensus on what should be expected from the Agency: it is an organ of cooperation and communication designed to bring about cultural and technical exchanges between member countries. The record of its activities to date has on the whole been favourable, as is indicated by the general satisfaction of its members, and, what is even more significant, by the steady growth in membership, from 20 States at the beginning to 36 today.

The federal government has not sought to be the exclusive Canadian participant in the Agency. From the outset it has endeavoured to involve provincial governments in its francophone activities. Thus two governments enjoy the status of what are called participating governments in the Agency: Quebec, since 1971, and New Brunswick, since 1977. We were pleased and reassured to see a province that is 40 per cent francophone become so closely associated with the activities, programs and institutions of the Agency. This status of participating government allows New Brunswick representatives, who are members of the Canadian delegation, to express their own views on subjects that concern them. Incidentally, one week from now, Mr. François Owono-Nguema, the new Secretary-General of the Agency, who took office on March 1, will be in Fredericton, and I think he will also