

to join the African Development Bank as a non-regional member. We have intensified our relations with the countries of the Continent, and expanded our co-operation with them in many fields.

Beyond the North-South dialogue, there is the multilateral system as a whole. It is obvious that countries such as Nigeria and Canada have an important stake in the operation and evolution of a stable and effective trade and payments system. We have an equal stake in the pursuit of justice and the maintenance of international security.

There is, unfortunately, a tendency in troubled times to take for granted the instruments of international co-operation: to assume that the United Nations, the international economic institutions and the specialized agencies will do their job while we pursue our own immediate and pressing concerns. That inclination may be heightened by a sense that we, as individual countries, can do little to influence events. Some countries may turn inwards and neglect the instruments of co-operation.

That would be a great mistake. It is, after all, the time and effort we put into the multilateral system, at some cost to ourselves, that will shape the world of the Eighties and beyond that. The effort requires patience and persistence. To achieve results, we must not lose that sense of tolerance, understanding and accommodation which we have learned in running our own countries. None of us can hope to shape the world in his image. But Nigeria and Canada – each in its own way fortunate in resources and potential – cannot escape the obligation to sustain and strengthen the international institutions which enable us to work together. That, too, is in our national interest.

The members of this institute study these matters closely. I would not wish them to take it amiss if I suggest, at this point, that foreign policy is more than calculation or systematic analysis. It is also a matter of human contacts and personal understanding. We turn naturally to those we like. We follow natural affinities and historical ties.

This magnificent country, dynamic and varied, conveys a sense of vitality to every visitor. Nigeria commands our attention as an important political and economic force, but it also engages our affection and respect. With this in mind, we very much look forward to strengthening our co-operation with you both bilaterally and in the international sphere.

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