

The Canadian Government is contributing to this project because it realized that this road is indispensable for an entire region of Niger. It is also conscious of the effects which construction of the road will have on the economic development of a vast area and of the benefits which it will bring to its population. This is, indeed, the basic reason for my presence here today. It is an expression of the Canadian Government's desire to co-operate with countries such as Niger which are devoted to economic development in order to bring greater well-being to their populations, and to encourage their efforts. It is also a sign of the seriousness with which we regard our role in Niger's development, begun by the Chevrier Mission, maintained by regular meetings between representatives of our two countries, and already defined once last winter, during the visit here of the President of CIDA, Mr. Paul Gérin-Lajoie.

Mr. President, both Canada and Niger are immense countries in comparison to their small populations and one might say that both are multicultural.

Unity in each of our countries requires effective communications among their population groups. Each of us has also found in his own way, that the conduct of international relations rests on just this same factor, thus showing that the distinctive character of our national unity also serves to express the international calling of our peoples.