

are discussed. In little less than 20 years, Canada has recognized all the States of French speaking Africa, has opened 7 embassies which are accredited to those States, and has created a programme of bilateral aid which now exceeds \$100 million per year. As this represents about 20% of total Canadian bilateral aid, it is clear that membership in the French speaking community (Francophonie) has become, along with participation in the Commonwealth, a permanent aspect of this country's foreign policy. This relationship has led to a better understanding and co-operation with this important part of the Third World.

Co-operation

Development aid, of course, remains one of the main components of our relations with these countries and has acquired over the years a considerable importance as much by its diversity as by the amounts which have been allocated to French speaking Africa (including the countries of the Maghreb region). Canadian co-operation, which counts on the effective support of the provincial governments and particularly that of Quebec as far as French speaking States are concerned, includes many fields such as public health, managerial training, housing, and energy. However, it is in the field of rural and agricultural development that Canada's action has an increasing impact, in conformity with one of the principal objectives of the 1975-80 strategy. Canada also participates in numerous consultative committees and contributes to the African Development Fund. Canada was, in fact, one of the principal parties promoting the creation of the Fund. The table of statistics attached illustrates the progression of Canadian aid in French speaking Africa and reflects the increasing importance of our country in this part of the world.

Francophonie

La Francophonie internationale constitutes an additional aspect of the co-operation between Canada and countries of the Sahel region and is expressed through the Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation, the Conferences of Ministers of Education, and of the Ministers of Youth and Sports of French speaking countries. Canada's participation in "la Francophonie internationale" is today a fundamental and prominent element in its foreign policy. In the last few years, Canada has sought to re-inforce and enlarge the movement in order to make it a useful instrument of dialogue and an efficient framework for co-operation between industrialized and Third World countries. Canada has, therefore, favoured within the Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation the establishment of a special programme aimed at promoting development through economic, social, and cultural co-operation, including aspects of education and training through