

IV. Canada's Participation in the UN System

The foreign policy review of 1970 stated as a basic premise that Canada "should continue its policy of working actively to achieve the goal of making the UN an effective instrument for international co-operation and improving its capacity to discharge its charter responsibilities". Some of the ways Canada has attempted to do this have been described in the preceding pages. This section analyses three major ways in which Canada concretely participates in UN activities: financial contributions, membership of UN bodies, and voting in the General Assembly.

A) Canada's financial participation in the United Nations family of organizations

The extensive contributions of Canada to the United Nations system of organizations, coupled with a Canadian tradition of prompt payment of assessments and pledges, are concrete examples of the firm official support that is accorded to the world organization. Since 1945, a total of \$843 million in cash and commodities has been paid by Canada to various UN programs and agencies. (See Appendix B.)

This global contribution can be broken down into a number of broad categories and enlarged to include other elements of participation that go beyond the provision of purely financial support:

- (1) assessed contributions (\$26 million to regular budgets in 1976 - see Chapter II G) plus \$4.6 million to the UNEF II/UNDOF special accounts;
- (2) voluntary contributions -- (a) contributions for activities of economic and social development (See Chapter II D c) and (b) donations of commodities such as wheat flour (WFP, UNRWA, refugees, humanitarian assistance);
- (3) provision of troops and equipment for peace-keeping;
- (4) services of Canadians in the secretariats of the UN and its agencies.

Voluntary contributions, generally provided through the Canadian International Development Agency, constitute approximately 85 per cent of Canada's financial involvement in the UN, and in 1976 amounted to \$140 million. Within this amount, Canadian priority was attached to the central development funds of the UN (UNDP, UNICEF), which together received about \$28 million, and the World Food Program, with \$99 million (\$10 million cash, \$89 million in food grains). The concentration of Canada's aid to the foregoing UN institutions reflects its position as one of the world's major food producers and its preference in principle to channel assistance through general development funds rather than the several project funds established from