

certain that the progress made in Canada can also be made in Africa. The question facing us is how to achieve that goal while respecting cultural and religious contexts that are different from those obtaining in the West, and without in the process denying the traditional importance of the role played by women, for example, in the commercial life of most African countries. For that purpose CIDA has set up a special branch to ensure that each of the Agency's programs will take into account the role of women in development, and I want to make certain that this concern will also prevail in our involvement in Africa.

Canada's presence in Africa is based on a number of principles that it is useful to recall here.

- The first is to project our national identity abroad. This principle is applied through the ties we have made with the French-speaking nations and the Commonwealth countries.
- Furthermore, it has always been very important to Canadians that they express internationally the concept of social justice that motivates them within their country through a development assistance program designed to achieve a more equitable sharing of the world's wealth. The amounts Canadians contribute voluntarily to organizations involved in development bear eloquent testimony to this desire.
- Canada's economic health depends to a large extent on its exports. Our country's economy has been built through the vitality of its entrepreneurs and of its people, and Canada knows that a similar vitality exists in Africa. We intend to work to increase our economic relations with the African continent, knowing also that private investments and trading exchanges have just as much development potential as co-operation projects of the classical type.
- Finally, Canada intends to help maintain peace and security by contributing to the solution of certain questions either through direct participation, as in the discussions to settle the Namibian crisis, or through the UN, for example by taking part in the peace-keeping forces sent a few years ago to the country that is now Zaire.

As the African countries gained their independence, Canada extended its network of Embassies and High Commissioner's Offices. We now have these establishments in about twenty countries, where they are working to build close relations with each of the countries on the continent in accordance with the major objectives I have just outlined. Since those states have urgent needs in the area of their economic and social development, Canada's action was naturally concentrated first in that area, and we allocated to Africa approximately 40% of our budget for bilateral co-operation, or about \$300 million per year. This sector is important; it is probably for each of you the most visible element in our day-to-day relations.

However, it should not be forgotten that this bilateral co-operation represents only 43% of the budget Canada allocates to development assistance each year. Thus on the average, depending on the year, more than 40% of our food aid and emergency assistance is also