

political and economic situation, and decided to collaborate in several areas.

With this first summit, La Francophonie made a big step. The leaders went beyond exchanging views and having bilateral agreements between pairs of countries. They laid the foundations for programs through co-operation among many countries. Today, La Francophonie is a forum for co-operation in nine technical fields that are considered priorities: agriculture, energy, environment, culture, communications, scientific and technological information, language industries, legal co-operation and education and training.

In 1987, Canada, Québec, and New Brunswick made a joint invitation to a summit in Québec City. Forty countries attended. At the Québec summit, the leaders adopted a number of programs. For example, they set up a co-operative project to support the creation of small agricultural businesses in Africa, and they established a francophone institute of energy, based in Québec, to train specialists in the energy field.

They also passed a Declaration of Solidarity, in which they agreed to respect each others' diverse traditions, and to work in a spirit of "solidarity, cooperativeness, and mutual understanding." They expressed their desire to "together take up the great challenges of development and modernization that lie before us."

In 1989, representatives of 41 governments and countries met in Dakar, Senegal. This meeting stressed the role of education and training within the French-speaking community. The French government won praise for canceling \$3-billion worth of debt owed to it by 35 poor countries.

The most recent summit took place in October 1993, in the Republic of Mauritius, in

## SPORTS AND CULTURE: THE FRANCOPHONIE GAMES

**S**olidarity and excellence are the twin themes of the second Jeux de la Francophonie, to be held this summer in France. Organizers expect 3000 athletes and artists from around the world will attend. The first-ever Francophone Games were held in 1989 in Morocco, and drew 2000 participants from 39 countries.

Events for elite athletes will include track and field, soccer, judo and women's basketball. There will be two races for wheelchair athletes. Cultural events such as singing, art, dance and television specials will highlight the creativity and diversity of francophone peoples.

the Indian Ocean. This country is held as a model of integration, a melting-pot of people from Chinese, Indian, African and European ancestry. A former French, then British, colony, English is the official language. The majority of the one million residents speak Creole. Eighty percent understand French, which is widely used in newspapers, radio, and television.

Forty-seven countries attended the Mauritius summit, including Bulgaria, Romania, and Cambodia. They passed 21 resolutions, including several that addressed important international issues. As Anerood Jugnauth, prime minister of the Republic of Mauritius, said in a closing speech, "these messages issued by the summit to the rest of the world express the desire

of La Francophonie to make its presence felt in the concert of nations."

For example, France pressed for, and got, a resolution supporting its determination to exclude cultural goods from the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which was being negotiated. France argued that if culture — including films and television series — were included in the GATT, the power of money would lead to world domination by one culture. When the GATT negotiations were concluded, culture was excluded. Other important resolutions addressed the issues of Haiti and of human rights.

The leaders also raised their concerns about the status of the French language. They passed resolutions demanding that the United Nations respect the status of French as one of its six official languages, and reminding Olympic Games organizers that French is an official language of the Olympics. The president of the Olympic organizing committee had used English, with no remarks in French, to announce the location of the next games.

Because Canada has a large French-speaking population, our government has been active from the outset in creating and supporting the many institutions of La Francophonie. Today, involvement in La Francophonie is an integral part of Canadian foreign policy.

The Canadian government says its objectives are not based on the hope of an immediate return, or on the prospect of financial gain. But Canada expects that, as a middle power, it can have an influence on this community. Its role here is comparable to its role in the Organization of American States or the Commonwealth. It can also derive cultural and scientific benefits from its association with these countries.