

Federal-Provincial Co-Ordination

The federal-provincial co-ordination function serves to strengthen the Canadian government's capacity to meet the growing international aspirations of the provinces, to help the latter carry out their recognized international activities and to formulate government policy on the international activities of the provinces and on their role in Canadian foreign-policy-making.

The provinces have access to the Department's telecommunications network and to the services Canada's diplomatic missions abroad can provide. The Division administers an Information-Flow Program in which the ten provinces take part and which provides them with analyses and information from the Canadian embassies in Washington and to the European Economic Community on policies and activities of the United States and the EEC in areas of provincial interest. The program has been carried out by means of oral briefings, exchanges of visits by officials, and a regular flow of written reports and documents; it covers matters that include natural resources and environment as well as energy and trade.

The year 1978 was one of continued provincial activity on the international scene, particularly multilateral activity. Several international conferences involved the participation of various provincial governments: the twentieth Conference of UNESCO, the thirty-first session of the World Health Assembly, the nineteenth Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization, the sixty-fourth session of the International Labour Organization Conference, plus several sectorial meetings of the Commonwealth and the OECD, particularly in the education field. The provinces were consulted in the preparation for Canada's participation in the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development, and they co-operated in drafting the report presented by Canada to the United Nations as their contribution to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

With regard to relations with the European Economic Community and implementation of the Canada-EEC Framework Agreement, the provinces took part in the work of two subcommittees of the Joint Co-operation Committee (JCC) dealing with industrial and general co-operation respectively. The interested provinces were able to take part in joint working groups created by the subcommittees to study specific questions such as aeronautics, telecommunications, forest products, metals and minerals. The exchanges and official contacts between provincial officials and Community representatives were continued and led to productive consultations concerning asbestos policies among other things.

The provinces showed a similar interest in the Canada-Japan Joint Economic Committee; as a result, arrangements were made which enabled the provinces to be associated with the Committee and to be kept informed of the progress made in discussions and relations between Canada and Japan.