

Visits during 1976 by the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for External Affairs to Latin America, Asia and the Middle East underlined the significance that Canada attached to its relations with those regions.

East-West relations and détente

It is clear that the continuation of peaceful relations between East and West is based on a credible Western deterrent, effective Atlantic defence arrangements, and a stable military balance between East and West. Canada's firm commitment to collective security and the importance it accords to participation in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the North American Air Defence Command Agreement (NORAD) were underlined by the completion of arrangements for the purchase of a new long-range patrol aircraft (LRPA) and tanks for the Canadian Armed Forces.

Détente is a dynamic process of East-West adjustment that seeks to reduce tension, promote co-operation and mutually-beneficial relations and thereby to lessen the risk of direct military confrontation. In particular, the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe offers a set of guide-lines and a framework for the development of more normal and open relations between the Western democracies and the Soviet Union and the other Eastern European Communist states. Canada has taken an active part in this process and has paid special attention to its human-rights aspects, particularly the reunification of families. Differing perspectives on, and actions which conflict with, the Canadian interpretation of the policy of *détente* have complicated the process. However, Canadians looked forward to further progress towards the implementation of the CSCE Final Act, especially at the review meetings scheduled for Belgrade in 1977.

Arms control is central to progress in East-West relations and to world peace and security, and Canada was involved in the continuing Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR) talks in Vienna. It also followed closely the continuing Strategic-Arms

Limitation Talks (SALT) between the United States and the Soviet Union.

International peace and security

A major international concern is to prevent the outbreak of local and regional hostilities where possible, and, if they do occur, to ensure their containment and so avoid the possibility of an escalation that could involve nuclear confrontation. In this connection, Canada was once again the largest contributor of troops for United Nations peace-keeping operations.

For the first time in a generation, Vietnam was at peace and there appeared to be some reason to hope for progress towards an inter-communal *modus vivendi* and a constitutional settlement in Cyprus. However, there was renewed conflict in the Middle East and Southern Africa. By the year's end, the civil war in Lebanon had been contained and, though the wider problem of a permanent settlement for the Middle East remained unresolved, it was hoped that fresh initiatives might provide the basis for negotiations during 1977 among the parties directly involved. At the same time, the deterioration in the situation in Southern Africa caused considerable international concern. Canada supported Anglo-American-inspired efforts to negotiate an agreement for a peaceful transition to majority rule in Rhodesia; however, with the adjournment, in November, of the Geneva Conference, prospects for an early settlement seemed to diminish.

As an exporter of nuclear materials, equipment and technology, Canada has been especially conscious of the dangers of the spread of nuclear weapons. During the year, the Canadian Government negotiated a series of bilateral agreements; and in December it unilaterally announced advanced full-scope safeguard requirements for the sale of nuclear equipment, technology and materials. Canada is resolved to continue working towards wider acceptance of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (to which some 20 additional countries announced their adherence in 1976) and the strictest possible safeguards among nuclear suppliers.