

policy of national reconciliation, Canada this year will host some forty heads of state and governments all having the use of the French language in common.

At one time, the concept of such a Summit, frequently mentioned and long desired by such great African leaders as Presidents Senghor of Senegal and Bourguiba of Tunisia, among others, could never have become reality. Let us be quite frank: one of the obstacles to such a meeting of Francophone countries had always been the difficulty of having the federal government and Quebec sit down at the same table in a spirit of respect for each other's legitimate powers, given that both would be participating in an international meeting.

It was high time that this burden weighing on the development of Canada-France-Quebec relations was removed. Thus, in November 1984, on the occasion of the visit to Canada of Mr. Laurent Fabius, the French Prime Minister of the time, Prime Minister Mulroney recognized the legitimacy of direct links between Québec and Paris, inasmuch as they would not infringe on matters under federal jurisdiction. This new attitude cleared the way for the start of negotiations which, scarcely one year later, led to the conclusion of an agreement allowing