

Canada has not and will not ever concede, regardless of setbacks and problems in certain African nations, its fundamental belief in the continent's future. We believe that through their own initiatives, African countries will one day achieve their enormous economic potential.

Unfortunately, in the past this potential has often been either ignored or ill used. The World Bank has observed that the main reason for the African economic crisis is the low yield from capital investments. (As I said earlier, this is not just in Africa). The Bank has suggested some internal policy reforms. Two of its recommendations are especially important, namely, better management of the public sector and a greater role for the private sector and non-government organizations. Another encouraging sign is that the Lagos Action Plan for the Economic Development of Africa has drawn attention to the necessity of involving the public sector, local businesses, research establishments and community groups in all aspects of development planning. Clearly this development scenario is based on a determination to see the situation improve.

This supreme effort that every country, including ours, must make from time to time gives me a sense of confidence. It convinces me that as a government we are right in giving a high priority to our cooperative programs, because we can explain to the Canadian public these efforts made by the African countries.

In fact, I think the future of the African continent lies in the new thinking that is evident, and the new initiatives that are being undertaken. I want Canadians to know that many African Governments have taken difficult, even courageous, decisions - to raise crop prices, to reform Government agencies, to decentralize control and pay more attention to smallholder agriculture. This new realism - this willingness to look at problems objectively and to put aside some long-time preoccupations - will help reverse the present predicament certain African nations face.

3 - Directions Taken by the Cooperation Program

I have dealt with this question more than once in recent months, and I will look at it very briefly today.

As I said at the meeting of the Dakar Club, our objective is to make our activities as efficient as possible. To do this, we wish to establish between all the Canadian participants active on the international scene a new partnership built on dialogue and cooperativeness. Without using any rhetoric, we have truly succeeded in achieving this partnership with the voluntary organizations in our response to the African food crisis.