

A Commitment to Multilateralism: Canada in an Interdependent World

We are a young nation but an old democracy. We are vast geographically and small in population. We speak two of the world's principal languages. We have been formed, in part, by the thought and the values of our French and British forebears. Our culture has been enriched by our native peoples and by immigrants from every land. Our vision of the world illumines our achievements and sustains our aspirations: tolerance, justice, generosity, and a desire for peace.

— Secretary of State for
External Affairs
Joe Clark

As a multicultural society shaped by international events and influences, Canadians have always possessed an international outlook. Proud of their diversity, they nevertheless realize the necessity for common purpose and action.

For Canadians, multilateralism is both an instinct and a vocation and they expect their government to play an active and positive multilateral role. It therefore comes as no surprise that "constructive internationalism" demonstrated through a deep and abiding commitment to the United Nations and the multilateral system represents the cornerstone of Canadian foreign policy.

The challenges of global interdependence necessitate multilateral co-operation. This may be an obvious truism, but it takes enormous skill,



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together with tenacity and strength of purpose, to put it into practice. Canada has attempted to meet the challenge by developing and maintaining ties with a wide variety of states both bilaterally and through its membership in key multilateral associations.

By virtue of its unique cultural heritage and commitment to multilateralism, Canada is the only member of the United Nations that combines membership in the Commonwealth, la Francophonie and the Economic Summit Seven. In fact, during the 10 months beginning in September 1987, Canada welcomed heads of state and governments from many countries as it hosted the Commonwealth, la Francophonie and the Economic Summit.

The United Nations: reaffirming faith in the dignity of all people.

The Commonwealth and la Francophonie form an important part of Canada's network of international linkages. Each has its own personality, traditions and style. The Commonwealth, for instance, has been described as a bridge of hope spanning apparently irreconcilable differences. Within the Commonwealth, Canada has long been recognized as an honest broker, interested in promoting informal discussions which often lead to consensus and common action.

At the last Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting held in Vancouver in October 1987, Canada once again focused its efforts in iden-

tifying effective and appropriate measures aimed at ending the abhorrent practice of *apartheid* in South Africa.

La Francophonie brings together more than 40 countries united by their common usage of the French language. During the Quebec City Summit in September 1987, members laid the groundwork to expand the areas for fruitful co-operation in developing programs in education, culture, communications and energy. In chairing the Comité du Suivi, Canada is involved closely in efforts to develop and implement these programs.

Canada also participates in the annual Economic Summit of Western industrialized nations. At the most recent meeting in Toronto in June 1988, Canada again took the opportunity to share its perspective on international economic trends and to broaden the consensus on the macro-economic measures required to ensure continued world financial stability along with economic growth and development.

Canada in the United Nations

At the centre of Canada's multilateral network lies the United Nations. Canada has been a strong and faithful supporter of the organization since its establishment.

In 1945, Canada sent a very high-level delegation including the then Prime Minister MacKenzie King and two future prime ministers, Louis St. Laurent and Lester B. Pearson, to the San Francisco