

Apart from the support we are giving and intend to give to the activities of the inter-American institutions concerned with development in the hemisphere, we are concerned that Canadians, too, should become involved in this new dimension of our foreign policy. To this end, we have brought into being a bilateral program of technical assistance to Latin America. In the context of this program, we have identified certain areas -- agriculture, fisheries, forestry, education and community development -- which have been recommended to us as carrying a high priority and in which we like to think that Canadians have a particular capacity to help.

We have also decided to increase the grants we are making to non-governmental organizations that have chosen to work in this part of the Third World. These organizations include religious orders with a long and distinguished tradition of service in Latin America and the Canadian University Service Overseas, which has provided a context of international commitment for the more than 1,000 young Canadians at present serving overseas. Canadians who have lived and worked in the countries of the hemisphere under the auspices of these non-governmental organizations express in tangible and human terms our concern for the people of this region and our desire to be associated with them as friends and partners. This association also adds to Canadian understanding of the achievements and aspirations of our hemispheric neighbours and may be expected, over the years, to provide a strong underpinning for the recent reorientation of Canada's foreign policy.

All these initiatives notwithstanding, there was an important gap remaining in our relation with the region. Canada's decision to seek full membership in the Inter-American Development Bank reflects our determination to close that gap. It is based on our conviction that the Bank is an important instrument for improving the prospects of growth and the quality of life in this region, and in assisting its members to develop their resources, their economies, and their societies. That conviction has been formed as a result of our association with the Bank over the past eight years. It has been buttressed by the strong and imaginative leadership which has been given to the Bank's operations by our distinguished President and his predecessor and by the accumulating evidence of the Bank's capacity to respond flexibly to the changing challenges confronting its members individually and the hemispheric community as a whole. We consider Canada's accession to full membership as the culmination of our search for a more practical and effective form of involvement in the problems of the hemisphere than was provided by our previous association with the Bank.

Canada is not classed as a developing country and we do not pretend to fall into that category. But there are resources still to be unlocked in Canada and there are new frontiers still to be opened up. There are problems we have encountered in the management of our resources and in the shaping of our national economic environment which may well not be unique to Canada. In joining the Bank we shall be glad to put our experience at the disposal of our partners without endeavouring to export Canadian prescriptions or solutions. We intend to exercise our responsibility in an objective manner. The dictates of sound development will be uppermost in our minds. Our goal will be to assist the Bank in maintaining its role as an effective development institution and to enhance its capacity to serve the needs of its members. We recognize that this