

information -- all these things are possibilities, and all are bound to do nothing but good for all members of the Agency.

The instrument we have at our disposal, in the form of the Agency, is a product of modern thinking; what our governments expect from it is a receptive attitude towards change in the world, the social and cultural integration of the most daring creations of science and technology, and other no-less-important contributions. Our co-operation is inspired not by nostalgia but by a desire for progress. *La Francophonie* is not a memory but a vision.

With substantial resources at its disposal, and with a growing understanding of what its functions are, the Agency is clearly the prime instrument of our co-operation and the broadest and most solemn expression of our common desire to work together. This Conference will no doubt give a fresh impetus to its efforts to discharge the mission our governments have entrusted to it, and increase its capacity to co-ordinate multilateral activities of member countries.

The Agency is dedicated to dialogue and the free exchange of ideas. It is not a cultural melting-pot. Its intention is that each culture should both intensify and share its peculiar strengths through genuine and mutually-enriching exchanges. As their originality and richness are thus increased, different cultures inevitably produce echoes despite the barriers of diversity and distance, and men of all backgrounds and regions come together in recognition of their common human condition.

Such is the spirit that gives vitality to our association, and it is nothing if not constructive. "Continuing cultural dialogue", "promotion and growth of national cultures", "mutual understanding", respect for "the individual characteristics" of each member -- these are the Agency's fundamental ideas and objectives, expressed in the very words of its Agreement and Charter.

Let me point out here how very close this is to the Canadian ideal -- the achievement of solidarity through the fostering of diversities. Canada, your host, fully shares your aspirations. Its representation bears witness to its desire to bring together in the community of the French language all the resources and men of goodwill seeking that means of expression.

The French "fact", which is in full flower in Quebec, also has roots in several other Canadian provinces. Ontario has more than half a million French-speaking citizens; in New Brunswick, nearly 50 per cent of the population is French-speaking, and a substantial French minority in Manitoba is making its voice heard more and more vigorously. This is why the governments of Quebec, New Brunswick, Ontario and Manitoba have been participating with us for years in the co-operative effort that led to the creation of the Agency, and continue to have the broadest possible access to it. They all took part in its founding Conference and participated in Canada's signing of the Agreement, as well as in the first meeting of the General Conference.

The Conference gave its consent to this manner of proceeding; the Charter made provision for participation by these governments in the Agency's institutions, programs and various forms of activity, subject to the approval