

VII. CABINET DECISIONS

A very large component of the current mandate of the Department of External Affairs is derived from decisions taken by Cabinet. The following paragraphs illustrate Government decisions of recent years that have continuing validity in defining, adding to or subtracting from the responsibilities of the Secretary of State for External Affairs and his Department.

In 1960 the Government decided to create the External Aid Office (converted to the Canadian International Development Agency in 1968) as a separate agency under the supervision of the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

Participation in or representation at international conferences was dealt with in a directive of 1969 (currently under revision) which:

- (a) defined the circumstances in which participation in a conference required Cabinet approval;
- (b) assigned to the SSEA and to his Department responsibility for coordinating Canadian participation in international conferences;
- (c) set out criteria which the SSEA should ensure were observed in the composition of delegations;
- (d) authorized the SSEA to issue credentials for Canadian delegations where all requirements had been met.

A series of Government decisions in 1970 set up the mechanisms for integration of foreign operations referred to in the White Paper "Foreign Policy for Canadians", i.e.

- (a) an Interdepartmental Committee on External Relations (ICER) under the chairmanship of the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to guide the process of integration of foreign operations and to advise the Government, through the SSEA, on policy regarding foreign operations, on harmonization of "country plans" of departments with external interests, on allocation of resources for external operations and on the recommendation of heads of mission;
- (b) a Personnel Management Committee as a sub-committee of ICER;
- (c) a Task Force under the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to report on the integration of support services for foreign operations and, subsequently, assignment of the authority to manage such services to the Department of External Affairs.