Development co-operation and debt relief

Key elements of Canada's strategic approach to development co-operation and debt relief are

- Making capacity development central to all co-operation activities to ensure the long-term sustainability of aid initiatives and to achieve multiplier effects from aid investments

- Developing more strategic approaches to poverty reduction — for example, working with other donors and with developing countries to establish national poverty reduction strategies with specific targets

- Developing more effective partnerships between governments and private sector and civil society organizations

- Strengthening efforts to reform governance in developing countries to enable the state to play the role of partner and catalyst in social and economic development

- Creating a more enabling environment for the private sector in order to leverage additional funds from domestic and foreign investors for development financing

- Continuing efforts to integrate lessons learned from earlier programming into current and planned activities

One-third of Canada's bilateral assistance goes to the least-developed countries, many of which are African. In fact, 45 per cent of Canada's total bilateral assistance goes to Africa. Canada will increasingly focus on countries which are committed to reform.

The Development Assistance Committee of the OECD has mandated work to begin on a recommendation for the liberalization of aid procurement for least-developed countries. The proposed text is to be completed by 1999. Canada will participate actively in this effort. This will involve working out modalities and implementation processes to ensure efficient and effective procurement, fairness and balance and a continued flow of aid to these countries. The effort will also aim to build strong public support for aid among donor countries.

Knowledge and information technologies are vital development tools and Canada is a world leader in this area. As a followup to the Global Knowledge Conference, hosted by Canada and the World Bank in Toronto in 1997, Canada, the World Bank and other international partners are collaborating to ensure the