

and potential. As a result, this continent is now much more closely associated in our eyes with our own concerns and priorities.

In 1972, we took the important step of acquiring permanent observer status in the Organization of American States. At that time, the OAS was on the verge of a deep re-examination of its own roles and functions as it sought to adjust to the dynamic evolution of Latin America. This re-examination is continuing, just as Latin America continues to change. We are watching the process with deep interest.

In addition, Canada has extended its support to integration efforts in the hemisphere. Among these are the activities of the Andean Group, which demonstrate the ability of dedicated governments to overcome crisis. The unique work of the Andean Group in pursuit of harmonized industrial development of its members is widely, and justly, applauded. I hasten to add, Mr. President, my awareness of your own dedication to the cause of Latin American co-operation and advancement.

These roles were chosen with care by Canada. They spell out, in our view, the strength of Canadian interest in hemispheric activity and emphasize as well the flexibility we believe is necessary at this time in order to permit our relations to mature most harmoniously and most beneficially. That flexibility permits us, for example, to play very active roles in both the Commonwealth, which claims six Caribbean area members, and l'Agence de Coopération culturelle et technique, which also has area interests. It is flexibility and the Canadian interpretation of how most effectively to co-operate with its neighbours and friends in the Group of 77 that led to the establishment of Canada's unique institution, the International Development Research Centre.

This body is funded in its entirety by the Canadian Government, but is directed by an international board representing ten countries in addition to Canada. It initiates, encourages, supports and conducts research into the problems of the developing regions of the world and into the means for applying and adapting scientific, technical and other knowledge to the economic and social advancement of those regions. It has, for the most part, concentrated its efforts on trying to improve the well-being of rural peoples. The Centre does this by making grants directly to institutions in the developing countries to permit them to do their own research and so to develop their own skills and the institutions so necessary to deal with their own problems.

At the present time, projects funded by this Canadian enterprise are under way in many Latin American and Caribbean countries. A

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