

homes, notably in Montserrat, Grenada and Antigua, and are resident in the area for at least part of the year. These movements of people are not always free of difficulty. But the balance sheet is decidedly pro-goodwill, of economic benefit to the region and a source of personal pleasure to Canadians. Regular meetings of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, and the frequent special exchange visits of Canadian and Caribbean parliamentarians, have developed a special relationship and affinity between legislators.

**Development aid**

As you would expect, we also looked closely at our development co-operation relationship.

Public consensus in Canada supports this co-operation. For average Canadians, the Commonwealth Caribbean is the part of the developing world they know. It was one of the first areas of concentration for Canadian development assistance. It is an area where we have confidence that aid dollars are well spent. Waste and ostentation are minimal and a high degree of public probity prevails. I salute you ministers and your governments that this continues to be the case.

CIDA has disbursed approximately \$300 million (Cdn.) since the inception of its program in the area in 1959. Indeed the region remains the highest *per capita* recipient of Canadian assistance. In the current year Canadian development assistance provided to the Commonwealth Caribbean will total about \$41 million (Cdn.). Thirty-one million dollars bilateral assistance is provided on a government-to-government basis, about \$3.5 million through the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), \$5 million through the non-governmental program and about \$1 million by the industrial co-operation program. You will also be aware that the Commonwealth Caribbean has benefited from Canadian funds provided to the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), International Monetary Fund (IMF), International Development Bank (IDB), Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (CFTC), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and its agencies which fund programs in the area. In short, there is an impressive tradition of important investment. We decided to protect and enhance this mutual investment for the future.

**Political ties**

Quite naturally we reviewed our political links. We found that Canada's relations with the states of the region have traditionally been excellent, nourished by a constant two-way flow of leaders on private and official business. In the past year, Canada has had the pleasure of receiving visits from the foreign ministers of Jamaica, Barbados and Grenada, as well as the premier of Belize and the chief ministers of the British Virgin Islands and Montserrat. Canadian ministers in turn have just completed visits to Barbados, St. Vincent and Jamaica. I myself am coming from Barbados and St. Kitts-Nevis and am combining my participation at the Canada/CARICOM Joint Trade and Economic Committee (JTEC) with an official visit to Jamaica.

We recognized that the area is not trouble-free in political terms, and that our close and easy ties could therefore never be taken for granted. We looked at security considerations, and the important geopolitical place of this area in the Western Hemisphere. We came to conclusions that were both sobering and heartening. We are resolved to play a responsible and responsive role.

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