

The Commonwealth has been important to the pursuit of other Canadian foreign policy objectives. The transformation of Rhodesia to the new Zimbabwe; the growing acceptance of women as full parties in economic and political life; the effort to move forward on North/South economic issues - - in these and similar areas the Commonwealth has made significant contributions.

The success of the Commonwealth inspired much of the thinking which went into the hosting of the first-ever Summit of Francophone nations last month in Paris. We have great hopes that this forum too will become an instrument for international understanding and human progress.

Canada's foreign policy is conducted through a complex array of bilateral and multilateral associations and institutions. To understand this country and its position in the world we must look at the ways in which we pursue our national goals in concert with our allies and friends around the world. We have a distinct foreign policy because we have a unique set of international relationships; no institution makes a more profound contribution to our own sense of ourselves than the Commonwealth.

Mr. Speaker, Canada has invited Commonwealth leaders to convene in Vancouver in 1987 for their next meeting. The invitation demonstrates our commitment to the Commonwealth; the Vancouver meeting will demonstrate to Canadians the Commonwealth's attachment to and respect for Canada and the principles which guide this country in our activities around the world.