

— Last, but far from least, there are key issues which derive from our society's fundamental commitment to social justice — the issues of political liberation and North-South relations. I would like to return to these later.

You, Mr. Director-General, and other students of Nigerian affairs, could no doubt identify similar objectives within Nigerian foreign policy. It may be a matter of avoiding or resolving conflict in the region; or sustaining the price and volume of your petroleum exports; or seeking markets for your tropical products.

I have, indeed, heard something of the last point during this trip. I should perhaps recall that Canada included processed cocoa products in its generalized system of tariff preferences because of representations from Nigeria and other cocoa producers. The signing of our Joint Economic Agreement and the creation of a Joint Economic Commission, one of the highlights of this visit, will provide a ready forum in which we can raise and pursue questions of this kind with one another in the future — in the pursuit of our national interests.

I have outlined a number of areas in which Canada and Nigeria may pursue their national interests bilaterally or with other countries. There are no doubt many others. But even the most exhaustive inventory of immediate concerns will not, of itself, represent a fully coherent approach to foreign relations. We obviously cannot leave out of the picture the international environment in which we operate.

Nigeria, the ninth most populous country in the world, a leader in Africa with great economic potential, has an evident stake in the broader framework. And so has Canada, as a major trading country with world-wide ties. What can countries such as Nigeria and Canada do to support and shape a favourable international environment in the world of the Eighties? A world in which, I would note, national governments are absorbed by slow growth within their own economies, high levels of unemployment, the slackening of the demand for their exports and the danger that newly erected trade barriers will block their access to markets. Paralleling these concerns are the concerns which have been expressed about the continued ability of our major international institutions to resolve disputes and find solutions, including the United Nations itself.

Let us look at some examples of what we are already doing to shape the international environment.

Nigeria has played a leading role in building and sustaining the Organization of African Unity (OAU) as a regional centre for consultation, co-ordination and the resolution of disputes. That effort embodies a far-sighted view of how this continent should grow, co-operate, and deal with conflict. May I say, from a Canadian standpoint, that we endorse your objectives and applaud your efforts. For an effective OAU, by strengthening co-operation within Africa, will enlarge the opportunities for co-operation between African states and their friends overseas.

A second example: Canada and Nigeria have taken a keen interest in decolonization and national independence in Africa — a matter, above all, of human dignity and human rights. Speaking for Canada, I would echo the points made by my Prime Minister when he visited Nigeria in 1981. We shall not waver