

Since that time, Mr. President, our exchanges have become deeper and more intense. Our diplomatic relations, which have never suffered from disagreement of any sort, are now the means to active co-operation in the most important realms of your nation's development. The year after our Centennial celebrations, the Honorable Lionel Chevrier came at the head of a Canadian mission of co-operation, to study with you the areas in which Canada and Niger might work together. Later, in response to your own proposal, Mr. President, Canada decided to join with Niger and other French-speaking countries of the world, at the first Niamey Conference which decided to create the Agence de Coopération culturelle et technique which came into being here two years later.

As a result of your initiative - and in addition to our bilateral ties - we became partners in a multilateral organization designed to enable us to work together on a world scale and in many areas on the basis of our common French heritage of language and culture. Moreover, to give further impetus to our growing friendship, you, Mr. President, returned to visit Canada in 1969 and again last year. These visits are the clearest demonstration of the intimate, even "family" bonds which have grown up between us.

Canadian friendship for Niger is shown in another special way by the dozens of Canadians who have been eager to come in recent years as replacements for those already here in various technical assistance fields: agriculture and cattle breeding, health and economic planning, and perhaps particularly in tackling the transportation problems which Niger faces.