

THE ACCT'S CHANGING MANDATE

At the time of the first Summit in Paris in 1986, the ACCT had fallen into a kind of bureaucratic lethargy which rendered it incapable of playing a significant role. Thus the first Summit largely ignored it as far as operations were concerned, as illustrated by its decision to establish the CIS while revising the structures, objectives and programs of the Agency. The CIS formed the Internal Committee on Institutional Reform to put an end to the Agency's marginalization in the Summits and to give it something more than a secondary role. Canada had an influential and decisive voice on the Committee, in calling for thorough reform as a prerequisite if the Agency was to fulfil the new responsibilities the Summits had in mind for it.

Whereas the Agency was given a warning at the Paris Summit, the Quebec Summit of 1987 acted as a catalyst by:

- using the Agency as its chief instrument;
- requesting that it adjust its budget and programs as dictated by the decisions made during the Summits;
- associating it directly with the work of the CIS via a joint advisory committee and a special advisor for follow-up;
- in particular, by submitting it to an in-depth review and assigning it a role tailored to the requirements of the Summits. This was the task of the Roy Committee on the Future of Institutions.

Finally, the Dakar Summit confirmed this evolution of the Agency, making it the Summit Secretariat, in three areas: programming proposals, budget allocation suggestions, and logistical support for operations.

This process was not formally ratified until the ACCT General Conference of Ministers in Ottawa in December 1989. On that occasion the organizational reforms and program adjustments prescribed by the Summits were approved, and Jean-Louis Roy was elected Secretary-General of the ACCT. Mr. Roy, a Quebecker, received the strong and decisive support of the federal government, which viewed the position as particularly important given the enhanced role the Agency was to play in the Summits.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE CHAILLOT SUMMIT

The Summit held in Chaillot in 1991 made it possible to reach an agreement to simplify, rationalize and harmonize the institutions of La Francophonie.

By establishing the Summits as the heart of the Francophone network, the heads of state and government have made these meetings the true driving force of La Francophonie, one which can give momentum to the other bodies.

Ongoing Summit work is carried out by the Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and of La Francophonie, which meets every year to ensure follow-up for the most recent Summit or to prepare for the next one.

The Summit follow-up and preparation committees (CIS and CIP) were merged by the Chaillot Summit into one body: the Permanent Council of La Francophonie (CPF). The CPF comprises personal representatives of the heads of state or government of 15 countries, selected at each Summit. It meets at least four times per year to deal with current business. In practice, however, all member countries may participate in the Council.