

Chapter 3

MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

Multilateral institutions complement bilateral channels in the promotion of Canadian interests and provide an essential means of responding to the growing economic, political and social interdependence of nations.

The Commonwealth

The Commonwealth Secretariat's review of objectives and priorities was unanimously adopted by Commonwealth senior officials at their meeting in Arusha, Tanzania, in December 1982. The review underlined the value which member countries attach to the Commonwealth as a vehicle for consultations, especially on North-South issues.

The Commonwealth Games in Brisbane, Australia were the big event of the year in international sport for Canada. The Department provided support services for more than 250 Canadian athletes, officials and media who attended the Games. Canada played a useful role in the negotiations concerning New Zealand's sporting contacts with South Africa, which had generated controversy a year earlier. The result was the adoption of a Commonwealth Code of Conduct on sporting contacts with South Africa, which removed some ambiguity for conduct under the 1977 agreement condemning such contacts.

The Prime Minister attended the Caribbean Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in St. Lucia in February 1983. This was an opportunity for Canada to reaffirm the Commonwealth connection, and pledge continued Canadian economic support.

The following Commonwealth Ministerial Meetings took place: (1982) – Health Ministers, Geneva, May; Employment/Labour Ministers, Geneva, June; Finance Ministers, London, August; Trade Ministers, Geneva, November; (1983) – Law Ministers, Colombo, February. Canada participated in all these meetings.

La Francophonie

The new Secretary General of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation, François Owono-Ngéma visited Canada in the spring of 1982. Canada's relations with la Francophonie were strengthened by the Prime Minister's official visit to the Agency's headquarters in Paris in November.

North-South co-operation

Canada maintained its strong commitment to the North-South dialogue despite the effects of the recession, not only on the prospects of developing countries but also on the capacity of donor countries to respond to their assistance requirements. A co-ordinated overall approach ensures that

Canada's economic policies take North-South implications into account and identifies interlinking issues of debt and finance, trade and aid.

The government reaffirmed its intention to increase its aid program to 0.5 per cent of the Canadian GNP by 1985-86. Canada also continued its efforts to promote greater understanding of the reality of global interdependence and the necessity of maintaining a constructive atmosphere for North-South co-operation. At the annual meeting of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in Toronto in September, Canada played a leading role in creating a special bridging fund for the International Development Association, the soft-loan affiliate of the World Bank.

The focus of the Department's activities in North-South co-operation was the effort to launch Global Negotiations, notably in the follow-up to the Versailles Economic Summit in June. In early 1983, the Department made extensive preparations for the Sixth Session of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD VI). This meeting was scheduled for Belgrade in June, 1983 as the principal North-South forum of the year, with the theme of "Recovery and Development."

During 1982, the Department co-operated with the Ministry of State, Fitness and Amateur Sport, and the Coaching Association of Canada, to initiate a program of co-operation in sport development with Third World countries. Pilot projects were undertaken with Singapore, the leader in the field among the ASEAN countries, and with the Supreme Council for Sport in Africa (SCFA), which co-ordinates the technical development of African sport. These first steps included an exchange of technical delegations to identify African priorities and objectives and the participation of senior African coaches in the Canadian National Coaches' Seminar. They also provided sport-technical documentation of the Sports Information Resource Centres of both the SCSA and Singapore, and projects for upgrading the personnel and technical resources of the SCSA information centre.

The United Nations

The year was a difficult one, with constant economic crisis and armed conflict among nations. The effectiveness of the United Nations in helping resolve such issues remained under heavy scrutiny. However, the new Secretary General, Javier Perez de Cuellar of Peru, won universal respect for his candid analysis of threats to international security and how the UN might be strengthened to respond to them, and his efforts to mediate the Falkland Islands conflict. He visited Canada