

## **Overview of Canada's Objectives**

### **Background**

At its previous summits, in particular the Dakar Summit of 1989 and the Chaillot Summit of 1991, the Francophonie took specific steps to begin promoting democracy among its members, strengthening the constitutional state and advocating human rights. The purpose was to make the Francophonie more politically active, like the Organization of American States, the Commonwealth and other forums.

To adjust to this new reality, the Francophonie began a major overhaul of its institutions, making the permanent council responsible for day-to-day management of its activities. At the same time, it gave the president of this council the role of spokesman and orchestrator of the Francophonie, in conjunction with the Secretary-General of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation (ACCT).

The Francophonie, whose summits began taking place in 1986, has taken on a major program of co-operation in various fields, namely education and training, culture and language, communications, sustainable development, legal and judicial co-operation, and economic promotion.

Today the Francophonie has some significant achievements to its credit, due to the efforts of the ACCT, its keynote agency; the AUPELF-UREF, its specialized agency for higher education and research; TV5, the international television network; and Alexandria University.

### **Objectives**

At Cotonou as the result of a Canadian initiative, the Francophonie will extend its political action by becoming involved in conflict prevention. It will not create a mechanism for intervention, thus duplicating the efforts of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity. Rather it will complement the work of other partners, seeking peaceful solutions to crises and conflicts among its members. This could take the form of good offices missions and special programs to support the democratic institutions of countries in difficulty.

The Cotonou Summit will also extend the institutional reform begun at Chaillot by adopting the principle of having an elected secretary-general of the Francophonie to give a political voice to the francophone community.