

# Federal-provincial relations

The Department's Federal-Provincial Co-ordination Division was established in September 1967 in response to the Canadian Government's decision to expand its capacity to satisfy the international aspirations of provincial authorities and to facilitate better their legitimate international activities.

Through the division the Department has sought to maintain a continuing working relation with provincial governments in order to keep itself informed of provincial aims, aspirations and policies with international implications. This division has served as an instrument for the development of effective co-operation with the provinces by means of liaison visits to provincial capitals and the co-ordination of activities relating to provincial concerns in the international field of other federal departments and agencies and of Canadian missions abroad.

The year 1977 was one of continuing provincial involvement in international activities. A number of major international conferences involved the participation of various provincial governments, including: the United Nations Water Conference; the sixth session of the Law of the Sea Conference; the World Health Assembly; the International Labour Conference; the Food and Agriculture Organization Conference; the UN Economic Commission for Europe Seminar on Human Settlements and Energy (held in Ottawa); the OECD High-Level Conference on Youth Unemployment; the thirty-sixth session of the International Conference on Education (UNESCO); and the seventh Commonwealth Education Conference.

An Information-Flow Program was created in 1973 to provide the provinces with information from the Canadian Embassy in Washington on the policies and activities of the United States Government in certain areas of provincial interest. The program has been carried out by means of oral briefings, exchanges of visits by officials, and a regular flow of written reports and documents. During 1977 the program was further broadened from its original emphasis on trade matters to include energy matters and environmental and social issues.

The interest of the provinces in the Framework Agreement between Canada and the European Community has led to their integration into the arrangement under the mechanism established by the Joint Co-operation Committee (JCC). During the year, a federal-provincial consultation system was established to keep provinces aware of activities arising from the Framework Agreement. The provinces were invited to participate in joint working groups and more recently in two subcommittees of the JCC dealing with industrial and general co-operation. Consistent with the growing provincial interest in relations with the European Community is the recently-inaugurated Information-Flow Program, modelled on the Washington pattern described above, which is designed to keep the provinces informed of political, economic and social developments in the European Community.

Official relations between provincial and federal officials in contact with the EC also increased. The Canadian Ambassador to the European Community visited Toronto to brief the Ontario Cabinet on the Community. Similarly, the representative in Ottawa of the Commission of the European Communities, Ambassador C. Heidenreich, visited several