

I. INTRODUCTION

This report seeks to give an account to the House of Commons and to the people of Canada of the official visits which I paid from April 13 to 26, as Secretary of State for External Affairs and Minister responsible for the Canadian International Development Agency, to five West African Countries, namely Nigeria, Upper Volta, Ivory Coast, Cameroon and Ghana.

I was accompanied by Mr. Yvon Beaulne, Director-General for African and Middle Eastern Affairs at the Department of External Affairs, Mr. Jacques Gérin, Vice-President of the Canadian International Development Agency, Mr. Maldwin Thomas, Director-General for Pacific, Asia and Africa in the Department of Industry, Trade & Commerce, and several other advisers. The group also included seven Canadian journalists, and on their behalf, I wish to thank the numerous African political figures who granted interviews and generally facilitated their work. The arrangements for our tour had been carefully planned by Canadian missions in Lagos, Abidjan, Yaoundé and Accra.

This visit to West Africa was one of the first diplomatic initiatives I had an opportunity to undertake since assuming responsibility for the Department of External Affairs and CIDA. It was in keeping with the Government's foreign policy which, while adhering to the traditional objectives of Canadian diplomacy, has sought in recent years to broaden and develop Canada's relations with many areas of the world in which the Canadian presence had not yet been adequately asserted.