

## PART A

### Chapter 5: GLOBAL AND TRANSREGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

#### UNITED NATIONS

The United Nations, the pre-eminent organization in the international community, provides the single most important multilateral forum in existence for the resolution of disputes and the promotion of international co-operation in many fields. Its numerous specialized agencies, programs and conferences cover almost every aspect of collective human endeavour.

#### Secretary-General

One of the major events of the year was the election of a new UN Secretary-General in December. The Security Council, facing its longest deadlock ever between the Austrian incumbent, Kurt Waldheim, and his Tanzanian challenger, Salim Salim, turned to Peruvian diplomat Javier Perez de Cuellar as the only compromise candidate acceptable to all five permanent members of the Council who hold veto power. Mr. Perez de Cuellar was then elected Secretary-General by acclamation in the General Assembly from 1982-1986. He is the fifth person to hold this office and the first from the Western Hemisphere.

In light of trends in the United Nations over the past few years, observers noted with particular interest the Secretary-General's inaugural address in which he stated his "firm purpose...to reactivate the political role of the Secretary-General". The fact that he did not campaign actively for the position, and does not plan to seek re-election, has given him additional independence. He also brought to his new office fluency in the three main UN languages, negotiating skills sharpened by previous delicate assignments on Cyprus and Afghanistan, and a concern for institutional and personnel management strengthened by his own experience in the UN Secretariat.

#### General Assembly

The thirty-sixth regular session of the General Assembly dealt with a wide range of political, disarmament, economic, humanitarian, legal, social and financial issues. The political and disarmament activities of the Assembly are covered in Part A, Chapter 1, and the highlights on the economic side are reviewed in Part A, Chapter 3. Canada's involvement at the session on human rights, refugees and legal matters is presented in Part A, Chapter 4, and an account of developments in social affairs follows in the present chapter. The regular session of the General Assembly was preceded in September by its eighth emergency special session in September to consider the question of Namibia.

The thirty-sixth session adopted a net UN budget of \$1,221 million (US) for the years 1982 and 1983. Even with last-minute additions, this