

initiative by the five Western members of the Council (Britain, Canada, France, Germany, the United States) to bring about the independence of Namibia on the basis of free elections supervised by the UN - efforts that were still continuing at the end of the year.

Some modest steps were taken in the field of arms control, and the special session on disarmament in 1978 was expected to give fresh impetus to the search for means to halt and reverse the arms race.

Human rights were another high-priority subject throughout the UN system in 1977. The two main barriers to progress in the area were the difficulties of agreeing upon a common approach to this sensitive question and the jealous protection by member states of the principle of national sovereignty. However, Canada and other like-minded countries took the position that human rights were a legitimate subject of international concern; and they will continue to press for improvements in the UN machinery designed to protect human rights throughout the world.

During 1977 the UN admitted Djibouti and Vietnam, bringing the number of member states to 149.

Canada began its fourth two-year term on the Security Council on January 1. Of the Council's 73 meetings during the year, 48 were devoted to African questions, and most of the others were taken up by discussions of the Middle East and Cyprus. Most debates concluded with resolutions worded in such a way that they did not attract negative votes, which has become a common Security Council practice. An exception was the vote by Canada and the other four Western Council members against three African-sponsored draft resolutions calling for measures against South Africa in terms they could not support. But agreement was later reached on a resolution, couched in more acceptable terms, condemning South Africa for its *apartheid* policies, and on the resolution imposing a mandatory arms embargo.

Southern Africa

Southern Africa continued to concern the United Nations, and there were a number of significant developments during 1977.

The Security Council, following further repressive measures by the South African Government and the death in prison of Steven Biko, a respected black leader, unanimously adopted on November 4 a resolution imposing a mandatory arms embargo on South Africa. This was the first time that the Security Council had taken action against a member state under the provisions of Chapter VII of the Charter. Canada, as a Council member, expressed strong support for this measure, which reflected a policy followed by the Government since 1963, when the Security Council first recommended cessation of arms shipments.

Canada also participated with the other four Western members of the Security Council in a joint effort to bring about the independence of Namibia on the basis of Security Council Resolution 385, which set out the conditions for an internationally-acceptable settlement. The five countries undertook repeated and intensive consultations with South Africa and with the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), which initially made a good deal of progress. Some of the more contentious issues, however, were not resolved by the end of 1977, and the search for an agreement continued into the new year.

Two UN special conferences dealing with Southern Africa were held during 1977. The International Conference in Support of the Peoples of Zimbabwe and Namibia took place in May in Maputo, Mozambique, and the World Conference for Action against *Apartheid* was held in August in Lagos, Nigeria. All major Western nations, including Canada, were represented at these conferences, which achieved considerable success. The member states' disposition to flexibility and compromise resulted in consensus declarations, which served to warn white ministries in Southern Africa that their policies were not acceptable to the world community. Canada supported British-U.S. proposals for a negotiated settlement in Rhodesia and indicated it was prepared in principle to