

# INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORGANIZATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS

## *Cairns Group*

The Cairns Group of agricultural exporters is a group of 13 countries (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Hungary, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Thailand and Uruguay) whose common goal is to promote agricultural trade reform.

The Cairns Group was named after Cairns, Australia, the site of its first ministerial level meeting, held in August 1986. Its efforts are credited with establishing far-reaching objectives for agriculture in the Uruguay Round.

## *General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)*

The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) is a multilateral trade agreement that came into force in 1948. GATT is the international instrument which lays down trade rules accepted by countries responsible for most of the world's trade. The GATT Secretariat has its headquarters at the United Nations in Geneva. GATT's basic aim is to liberalize world trade. Under its auspices there have been seven rounds of trade liberalization talks (Multilateral Trade Negotiations). In September 1986, agreement was reached to launch the new round of multilateral trade negotiations known as the Uruguay Round. In December 1988, Canada hosted in Montreal a mid-term conference of trade ministers to review progress made and provide new impetus to the negotiations. GATT has 96 member states, including Canada. The Director-General is Arthur Dunkel (Switzerland).

## *Group of Seven (G-7)*

The Group of Seven Finance Ministers (G-7) was created at the 1986 Tokyo Economic Summit. G-7, consisting of the finance ministers of the Summit countries (Canada, United States, United Kingdom, Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy and Japan), was formed in order to enhance the surveillance and coordination of international economic policies, with a view to improving the economic performance of member countries.

Since its inception, G-7 has met regularly, often with the participation of the Managing Director of the IMF. In February 1987, G-7 adopted the Louvre Accord, expressing the commitment of the members to intensified policy

coordination to promote more balanced economic growth and to reduce existing fiscal and external imbalances.

## *International Development Association (IDA)*

The International Development Association (IDA) is the concessional financing arm of the World Bank. IDA loans are concentrated in the very poor developing countries and are issued at no interest, with very long grace and repayment periods. The IDA obtains its funds mainly from the contributions of its richer members. Replenishments are arranged every three years through negotiations among the IDA's donors.

To the end of 1987, Canada had paid US\$2,343,800 to the IDA.

## *International Monetary Fund (IMF)*

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) was established in December 1945. Its purpose is to promote international monetary cooperation and, through enhancing the openness and stability of the international payments system, to promote international trade. The IMF makes financing available to member countries in balance-of-payments difficulties and assists them in improving their economic management. It also oversees the functioning of the international monetary system.

The Interim Committee of the Board of Governors, established in 1974, usually meets twice a year. It comprises 22 members representing the same countries or groups of countries ("constitutions") as those on the Board of Executive Directors. The Development Committee (the Joint Ministerial Committee of the Board of Governors of the World Bank and the IMF on the Transfer of Real Resources to Developing Countries) was also set up in 1974 with a structure similar to that of the Interim Committee. It reviews development policy issues and financing requirements. There are 151 member nations of the IMF, including Canada. The IMF Managing Director is Michel Camdessus (France). The Governor for Canada is Finance Minister Michael Wilson.