

Canadian exports to Francophone Africa reached \$623 million in 1983 and imports totalled \$203 million. Bilateral relations were also supported by the multilateral links provided by the international French-speaking institutions.

Most African countries experienced severe economic and financial problems. In 1983, Canada exported \$1.1 billion of goods and approximately \$350 million of consulting services to Africa, and imported goods worth about \$700 million. The main markets were Algeria, South Africa, Libya, Morocco, Nigeria and Tunisia.

Canada maintained its efforts to expand trade activities with the countries of Africa, mainly through assistance provided to Canadian exporters, but also in helping to develop appropriate mechanisms and ensuring a suitable environment conducive to trade. An Export Development Corporation line of credit amounting to \$542 million was established with Algeria. Parallel EDC-CIDA lines of credit were signed with Cameroun and Tunisia. At the fourth annual meeting of the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference, Canada made significant commitments to the energy, transportation and communication sectors of the region. Joint aid-trade initiatives were taken in Kenya in the energy and oil and gas sectors. In order to promote multilateral project opportunities and co-financing opportunities, the Department held meetings with the World Bank and the African Development Bank.

In addition to numerous ministerial missions during the year, the Department organized a number of incoming and outgoing commercial missions to support Canadian interests in Africa. There were three railway sector missions: from Kenya; to Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco; and to Gabon, Cameroun and the Ivory Coast. Other missions included mining to Zimbabwe, Zambia, Zaire and Ghana; special vehicles to Algeria; pulses to Algeria; fisheries to Algeria and Morocco; as well as three other incoming missions from Zaire, Ethiopia and Zimbabwe. A Canadian oil and gas mission travelled to Nigeria, Libya and Algeria to promote Canadian technology, products and services. In addition, Canada participated in the twentieth Algerian International Trade Fair and the Kaduna Trade Fair, and held a Canada Week in Abidjan.

To acquaint Canadian businessmen with opportunities in Africa, the Department participated in a number of seminars and meetings with Canadian businessmen in Ottawa, Winnipeg, Toronto and Montreal.

### **Latin America and the Caribbean**

Serious economic difficulties, characterized in particular by massive debt burdens, continued to confront most countries of the region during the past year. These difficulties were contained through various measures of international co-operation among private banks, international financial institutions and governments, and by generally sustained, although painful, internal adjustment efforts in the afflicted countries. Economic problems were exacerbated in Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia by a series of natural disasters ranging from droughts to floods. A meeting in Ecuador of the members of the Latin American Economic System (SELA) drew up the Quito Declaration and Plan of Action in an effort to develop co-operative approaches to dealing with the economic crisis. This subject was also the principal item of discussion at the twentieth session of the

UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLA), held in Lima at the end of March 1984.

Canadian exports to the whole region declined by 11 per cent compared to 1982 exports, while imports also dropped by some 12 per cent. Manufactured goods continued to be prominent, comprising 56 per cent of the total \$2.7 billion in exports. Imports continued to be heavily concentrated in raw materials, notably petroleum from Venezuela and Mexico, and agricultural products.

Although the adverse economic climate affected short-term market performance, Canada continued an active program of trade promotion, and continued to devote efforts to seeking remedies to the region's economic problems. Extensive participation in debt rescheduling programs affirmed Canada's long-term commitment to the market.

In 1983, Canada undertook some 80 individual export promotion projects, and Canadian ministers visited Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, Venezuela, Cuba, Jamaica, St. Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago and Argentina. At the same time, the development of an extensive export financing program sought to provide mechanisms to deal with the disruptive effects of the economic crisis, while supporting the efforts of Canadian businessmen to pursue marketing opportunities.

Visits to Canada by the Haitian Secretary of State for International Trade, the Trinidadian Minister of State Enterprises, and the Mexican Minister of Commerce and Industrial Development, confirmed the continuing importance of expanding trade relations despite the difficult economic climate.

### **South America**

In South America some positive results were recorded in political affairs in the continuing advance of democratic government, despite the pressures put on regimes by often severe economic and social demands. The most encouraging example of a democratic revival was the election process in Argentina, where the Radical Party won a decisive victory over the Justicialist Party and assumed power from the discredited military regime. In Venezuela, the democratic tradition was consolidated with elections which brought to power the Democratic Action Party. Canada was represented at the inaugurations of the new Presidents of Argentina and Venezuela by Cabinet ministers. Political developments were less favourable in Chile, where a series of mass protests over some months led to the establishment of a "political dialogue", but resulted in no acceleration of the timetable for the return of democratic government in that country.

The change of government in Argentina provided hope for an improvement of relations between Argentina and the United Kingdom following the conflict over the Falkland Islands. Both sides, through their protecting powers Brazil and Switzerland, put forward proposals for discussion on the normalization of relations between the two countries.

The Organization of American States (OAS), at a special session in March 1984, elected a new Secretary General, Joao Clemente Baena Soares of Brazil. At the same session, St. Kitts and Nevis was admitted to the OAS, bringing to 31 the number of members.

Canada continued the process of developing its political and economic relations with key countries of the region and these efforts were highlighted by a number of important ministerial and parliamentary visits. The fifth session of the Canada-