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exchanges between public servants and political figures, we wish above all to see such contact in the daily lives of the men, women and children of the Francophone countries. La Francophonie will have the task and the honour of putting technology at the service of people, and using it as an instrument for the renewal and the humanizing of our societies.

Our task is in fact to find the paths which we can all follow together into the modern age. Let us from the outset cast aside any feeling of powerlessness or any resigned acquiescence which would in effect leave to other groups, or other language communities, the task of shaping the science and technology of tomorrow. Several Francophone countries, including France and Canada, are already in the forefront in key sectors. We must intensify these efforts and ensure that others benefit from them. What Francophones invent, the software they develop, the technologies they perfect, they will not have to translate. All they will have to do is to add names, in French. To do battle for the French language in today's world is to create employment for Francophones and to gain admittance for them to the realm of modern science and technology. In other words, the best defence of the French language is the assertion of its presence.

I am convinced that the road to modernization necessarily lies through co-operation and development. For us Canadians who, following in the footsteps of our missionaries, raised the flag of mutual aid on the soil of Africa twenty years ago, the Francophone community can only be conceived of in terms of interdependence and North-South responsibilities.

Besides the elimination of illiteracy, which remains an absolute priority, the initiation of economic development in the African countries is an indispensable condition for reshaping La Francophonie as a truly international community. By this I mean that La Francophonie has the daunting task of building itself in and through its own members. But we must be realists. The donor countries are few in number and they already have to deal with troubling internal problems, such as unemployment, industrial instability and alarming budgetary deficits. They too must carry out painful readjustments. Their limited resources must be used, in the first place, for the benefit of their own citizens. But they would be failing in their duty if they were unwilling to channel a part of their wealth to the Third World, beginning with their knowledge, the transfer of which is an indispensable condition for the progress of less privileged societies.

It must not be inferred from this that we intend to limit the role of the Francophone community to that of a development agency.

The direct, personal participation of the heads of state and government will in fact give the community new drive. Our discussions will of necessity have a spontaneous character. As is shown by our experience of the Commonwealth, the exchange of views can go beyond immediate and specific questions and deal with major political issues which concern the heads of state and government. In such an atmosphere the leaders get to know one another; they openly compare their perceptions and they form friendships. In particular, when summits follow one another at fixed intervals, personal relationships between participants provide a setting for continuous interaction between their countries and the steady broadening of consensus.

This then is our vision of the Summit. If it is a success, that is to say, if it produces solid results, the Paris Summit should signal the birth of a new international club, more or less resembling the Commonwealth. I am thinking of an entity which, through a series of summit meetings, would set its own goals and its own modes of action, and would ultimately make a specific contribution on the international scene. I would not see it as a rigid organization but rather as a community with a warm sense of fellowship; not a pact, not a league, but an association built on solidarity, not resting on power relationships, but on co-operation.

We have a long road to travel. I will merely say that it is worth our while to embark on this journey, without illusions, but with firmness of purpose.

Canadians have long enjoyed and valued our association with the Commonwealth of nations. The Commonwealth provides a vibrant and vigorous link between a diverse group of nations and peoples joined by common heritage, ideals, and tradition. In Nassau, last October, at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, I saw at first hand how the informality and spontaneity of the Commonwealth forum can be useful and effective. The Commonwealth is a pragmatic and flexible organization. It provides a key element in the expression of Canada's international personality.

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