

Nations to create "special years" (such as International Women's Year) to underline issues of particular concern to member states. Although in agreement with their general purpose as a vehicle for focusing world attention on specific segments of the population, Canada had maintained that the proliferation of special years ultimately reduced their impact. Canada made representations in world capitals to gather support from member states on this issue. Guidelines and procedures have since been formulated for the proclamation and holding of future international years. These will be reviewed at the spring session of ECOSOC for final consideration and adoption by the thirty-fifth session of the UN General Assembly in the fall of 1980.

At its second session held in New York August 7 to September 8, 1979, the Preparatory Committee of the 1980 World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women scheduled for July 14 to 30, 1980 in Copenhagen, gave preliminary consideration to an outline for a Program of Action for the second half of the Women's Decade (1980-1985) and to a program of assistance to women in Southern Africa. These two issues, together with an evaluation of progress accomplished during the past five years, a special study of the social and economic needs of Palestinian women and a review of the situation of women refugees are on the agenda of the 1980 World Conference.

Canada attended the annual meeting of the World Health Organization's Assembly held in Geneva, Switzerland, from May 8 to 25, 1979. One of the highlights of the Assembly was the discussion regarding the formulation of a plan of action for Health for All by Year 2000 - the main goal of the Organization in the coming decades. This goal, as defined by the World Health Assembly, is: the attainment by all people of the world by the year 2000 of a level of health that will permit them to lead a socially and economically productive life. Canada has expressed its commitment to that goal by co-sponsoring Resolution WHA32-30.

The General Assembly of the United Nations adopted on December 18, 1979 a Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The Convention is the result of five years of consultations by various bodies of the UN. It contains measures to be taken by states to eliminate discrimination in various fields, including political and public life, the right to nationality, education, employment, health, marriage and family. Canada played a full role in bringing about the adoption of the Convention. Since much of the subject matter covered by the Convention falls within provincial jurisdiction, the government intends to initiate a process of consultation with the provinces with a view to Canada becoming a party to the Convention.

Canadian financial contributions to the UN system

Canada contributed \$17.5 million to the 1979 budget of the United Nations. Expenses are shared by all member states on a scale based largely on relative national income. Canada's assessment of 3.04 per cent is the ninth largest. As a member of the UN's family of specialized agencies,

Canada also pays assessments that amounted to over \$27 million in the 1978-1979 fiscal year.

Additional assessments are made for UN peacekeeping activities in the Middle East—UNEF II, UNDOF and UNIFIL. A special scale of assessments has been developed to finance these operations that increases the portion regularly payable by the permanent members of the Security Council and reduces the burden on the poorer countries. Canada's rate of assessment under this scheme is also 3.04 per cent, amounting to \$2.8 million in 1978-1979 for UNEF II and UNDOF. Payments of approximately \$3.7 million were made for UNIFIL in 1978-1979.

In addition to and far surpassing assessed contributions, are Canada's voluntary contributions to the UN system—mostly for development assistance. In voluntary contributions, Canada gives priority to the UN's general development assistance funds such as those of UNDP and UNICEF, which together received about \$49 million in 1979, and to the World Food Program, to which Canada contributed \$95 million (\$10 million in cash and \$85 million in food).

The concentration of its aid in these UN institutions reflects Canada's position as one of the world's major food producers and its preference, in principle, for channelling assistance through general development funds rather than the various special-purpose funds established from time to time by the UN specialized agencies. Smaller contributions in cash and kind went towards refugee activities, programs for the benefit of the victims of *apartheid*, and humanitarian and disaster-relief assistance. The major part of such expenditures was channelled through the Canadian International Development Agency.

LA FRANCOPHONIE

In 1979, Canada participated fully in the activities of La Francophonie, seeking to extend its linguistic duality into the international sphere and to give active support to promotion of mutual understanding and co-operation among the countries in the French-speaking world. Participation in La Francophonie has become a basic and permanent aspect of Canadian foreign policy; Canada sees La Francophonie as a useful forum and as a framework for effective co-operation. The activities and meetings in which Canada took part were particularly numerous in 1979 within the various institutions of La Francophonie, such as the Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation, the Conference of Ministers of Education, as well as the Conference of Ministers of Youth and Sports of French-speaking countries. Canada also supported the many initiatives of international French-speaking associations of a private nature.

Among events of special note: Canada hosted the Conference of Ministers of Education in Quebec City; it received the Secretary-General of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation on an official visit; and it hosted in Ottawa/Hull the meeting of the Agency's Special Development Program Committee.