

- encouraging Nigeria's place at the Forum of Federations,
- supporting Nigeria's regional role (i.e., active Nigerian participation at the Ghana Conference on War-Affected Children),
- facilitating parliamentary exchanges,
- reviewing defence cooperation (i.e., trying to instill a democratic culture within the Nigerian military and a respect for human rights),
- supporting/encouraging regional economic regimes (trade and investment).

She reminded participants that Canadian engagement has only intensified recently. Offices had to be opened, staff found, and additional resources acquired. A proposal for the creation of a trade commissioner position is under consideration and efforts are underway to restore a visa processing office.

Louis Guay, Deputy Director, West and Central Africa Division, DFAIT, welcomed the CCFPD's efforts to bring outside ideas to foreign policy development. He reiterated Sandelle Scrimshaw's remarks that the evolving Nigeria action plan is aimed at implementing ideas and projects that would give Nigeria the role it merits in the region and the development it deserves. The task is daunting, institutions in Nigeria are weak and crumbling, there is wide-spread corruption, the society is divided and human rights abuses continue. Nevertheless, overall "there is more hope than worry," he concluded.

Robert Foote, Canadian International Development Agency, outlined the engagement of CIDA in Nigeria. Presently, there is one Senior Development Officer working full time on the Nigeria file together with the Regional Director for the Gulf of Guinea Division. This summer, a senior planning officer will be posted to Nigeria and plans are underway for the establishment of a Program Support Unit for Nigeria as well. At the time of CIDA's July 1999 planning mission, the new administration had not had sufficient time to formulate sector policies and priorities, identify areas where donor assistance may be required or be able to engage in substantive bilateral consultations. CIDA's objectives were therefore to initiate discussions with selected government departments and to re-establish relationships with civil society groups and representatives of donor agencies based in Nigeria. Short and medium term strategies have been developed by the Desk but have not received formal approval within CIDA.

While it would be beneficial to have a long-term development strategy, the "in-transition" nature of the Nigerian government and the lack of resources allow for shorter-term pro-active projects with quick impact. (Among the recent CIDA activities were funding of a local civil society group for a constitutional rights project and a law students internship project, parliamentary seminars, a polio eradication project and others). When thinking about CIDA's activities in general, it is beneficial to keep in mind the framework within which decisions about funding and projects are taken. It includes the following considerations:

1. larger foreign policy objectives,
2. Canadian expertise and resources (i.e., capacity to help),