



Statements and Speeches

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CANADA AND AFRICA

A Speech by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, to the Fifth Annual Conference of the Canadian Association of African Studies, Toronto, February 19, 1975.

I am pleased to have this opportunity to speak to you on the subject of Canada and Africa.

One of the aims of my Department is to promote closer contact and dialogue between those who are looking at international affairs from the academic standpoint and those of us who have to make daily recommendations and decisions in this field. It is important for us to obtain and be aware of different viewpoints in order to give our decisions the soundest possible basis. With this in mind, I should like to discuss tonight the basic principles motivating our policy towards Africa.

Our first concern regarding Africa is precisely the same as in every other area of the world -- namely, the cultivation of mutually-beneficial relations with the nations of the continent, who have undertaken to recast their ancient cultures in the framework of modern statehood. Of course, the first prerequisite of fruitful interchange between nations is the maintenance of peace, and this is why the Canadian Government supports the general peacekeeping role of the United Nations and, as well, the work of the regional bodies directed toward the removal of sources of friction between African states.

Recent developments indicate that the impoverished and the deprived are not likely to remain for long in a peaceable frame of mind; their patience is wearing thin. Consequently, there is a direct link between our concern for peace in Africa and our concern for social justice. The foreign policy review of 1970 made social justice, along with peace and security, two of the most important of our six policy objectives. It also made it clear that social justice is to be pursued largely through development assistance. There are people who still question the wisdom of giving aid, in view of our own economic difficulties, not to mention some improvement in the incomes of some of those we are aiding. "What do we get out of this?" they ask. The answer to this is that in today's world we have no real alternative. To quote the report entitled *Partners in Development*, written by the Commission chaired by the late Lester B. Pearson:
