



3. The Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation (ACCT)

3.1 Origins

In 1968, the initial steps were taken to establish the concept of "La Francophonie" at the government level as the basis for a new form of multilateral co-operation. Government leaders from the African and Malagasi Community (OCAM) met and made plans to inaugurate an annual conference of Francophone heads of state.

They asked, first, that the ministers of education of the countries concerned meet to investigate ways of organizing co-operation among Francophones. As a result, on February 17, 1969, representatives of 28 Francophone countries assembled in Niamey, Niger, to hold the first Intergovernmental Conference, where they adopted the principle that there should be an Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation. An acting secretary-general was instructed to prepare a report on the possible activities and constitution of such an organization. The report was submitted at the second conference in early 1970.

Jean-Marc Léger, Secretary-General of the Association of Partly or Wholly French-Language Universities (AUPELF), was appointed Acting Secretary-General and, at the second Niamey Conference in March 1970, Secretary-General of the Agency.

3.2 Canada's Participation

In 1971, the federal government and the government of the province of Quebec reached an agreement on the conditions for Quebec's participation in ACCT institutions, programs and activities. An identical agreement was signed with New Brunswick in 1977.

As a result, the **governments of Quebec and New Brunswick** are recognized as participating governments. They both have a seat and a nameplate at the discussion table (in other words, they have the right to speak), and they are able to contact the Agency directly on questions of program structure. Both governments make separate contributions to the Agency, amounts