

# F RANCOPHONE SUMMITS

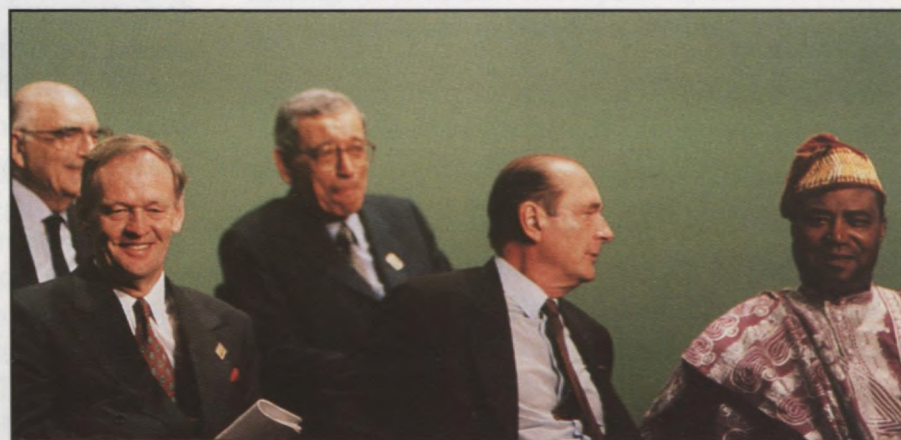


## EMERGENCE OF THE SUMMITS

It should be recognized in official history that the idea of bringing together the Francophone heads of state and government in a summit conference emerged long before the first formal meeting organized in 1986 under the auspices of France. In fact, the idea had already been sown in the 1970s, and was promoted by certain heads of state, namely presidents Bourguiba of Tunisia, Diiori of Niger and Senghor of Senegal.

In the mid-1980s, the Canadian government entered into a process to enable Quebec to participate separately in these conferences while retaining the principle of federal sovereignty in foreign policy. The conclusion of an original arrangement satisfactory to both parties was followed by the announcement of the first Summit in 1986.

Schematically, this arrangement, which still governs the relations of the two Canadian constituents, provides for full participation by Quebec in the co-operation aspect of the Summits, while Canada is reserved the leading role for the political and economic aspects, in which regard Quebec has "interested observer" status.



CIDA Photo: J. M. Carisse

The Right Honourable JEAN CHRÉTIEN, Prime Minister of Canada, the former Secretary-General of the United Nations, M. BOUTROS BOUTROS-GHALI, Mr. JACQUES CHIRAC, President of the French Republic, H.E. Mr. NICÉPHORE DIEUDONNÉ SOGLO, President of the Republic of Bénin.