
Middle East

on which some \$230 millions will be spent, will be superimposed on several existing bilateral programs. It combines essential emergency assistance with a development plan which looks beyond the immediate future toward solutions as permanent as circumstances permit. The research and planning is to be carried on in close co-operation with the multinational Committee to Combat Drought in the Sahel and with the many multilateral or bilateral organizations, both African and non-African, which are active in the area. In an effort to ensure sound administration of Canadian assistance earmarked for the Sahel, the Canadian Government opened offices in Ouagadougou, Niamey and Bamako. They are to operate under the supervision of our embassies in Abijan and Dakar.

Ministerial visits

Frequent and varied exchanges at cabinet level have provided an especially valuable means of communication with Francophone Africa.

During 1974 ministers from several countries of Francophone Africa, including the Vice-President of Niger, Sedo Souma Sani, visited Ottawa. Similarly, a number of prominent Canadians visited Africa. Gérard Pelletier, Minister of Communications, had discussions on telecommunications with his counterparts in the Maghreb. Lucien Lamoureux, Speaker of the House of Commons, visited Dahomey, Niger and Ivory Coast, and Lionel Chevrier represented the Canadian Government at the official opening of the National Library of Ivory Coast.

The visits and special missions served to emphasize the expansion of Canada's exchange programs with Francophone Africa and the links which are being forged at the level of both governments and peoples.

The Middle East is becoming an increasingly important region in Canada's external relations. Not only does the Arab-Israeli conflict continue to pose a grave risk to the world's peace and security, but also the new-found prosperity of many of the Middle Eastern countries carries important implications for the international community including Canada. Canada's major concerns there include the need to achieve a just and lasting peace, putting an end to the conflict that has existed since 1947, and developing our bilateral relations in the region, particularly on the trade and economic side. Canada is, of course, concerned by the possible imbalances to the world's economic and financial payment systems created by the major increases in oil prices by some of the oil exporters. This country also plays an increasingly active role in the promotion of a consumer-producer dialogue and the search for effective recycling mechanisms for the surpluses within the context of, notably, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Canada has consistently attempted to follow a policy of balance and objectivity as between the parties to the Arab-Israeli dispute. In accordance with the principles embodied in the UN Security Council Resolution 242 of November 1967, the Government believes that all states in the region have a right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries. The Government continues to believe also that Resolution 242 offers a valid and available framework upon which to base the negotiations required to achieve a peaceful and lasting settlement of the dispute. Moreover, as indicated by Allan MacEachen, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, in his address on November 20, it is essential in any enduring peaceful settlement that there be respect for the sovereignty, the territorial integrity and the political independence of Israel and of every other state in the Middle East. At the same time such a settlement must take account of the