

II Multilateral Activities

Organizational

The Commonwealth

During 1973 Canada's role as a member of the Commonwealth was dramatically demonstrated in August, when the Canadian Government was host to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Ottawa. Months of extensive work by federal departments and agencies and by the Commonwealth Secretariat, co-ordinated by the

Department of External Affairs, were required to prepare for this event. In particular, there was intensive co-operation with the Prime Minister's Office. As host and chairman, the Prime Minister wrote his colleagues well in advance to invite them to the meeting and to solicit their views on procedures and agenda.

The Prime Minister's Special Assistant, Mr. Ivan Head, visited

all Commonwealth countries to discuss with each head of government the organization of the business of the meeting, the procedures to be followed and the major substantive issues. This was the first time that so thorough a canvassing of heads of government had preceded a Commonwealth meeting.

These visits did much to encourage the attendance of govern-

In August, the leaders of 32 countries met in Ottawa for the first Commonwealth Heads of Government Conference ever held in Canada.

