

## II

### AREA DIVISIONS

#### African and Middle Eastern Division

The responsibilities of the African and Middle Eastern Division embrace the entire continent of Africa and the Middle East, including Iran, Israel and neighboring Arab states and the Arabian Peninsula. Canada maintains diplomatic relations with 46 countries within this area, having resident missions in 15 capitals. Of the countries concerned, 13 have resident missions in Ottawa.

The strengthening of Canada's relations with African and Middle Eastern countries was actively pursued during 1969. The importance which the Canadian Government attaches to developments in the Middle East, especially its concern about the human suffering and threat to world peace generated by the Arab-Israeli conflict, was emphasized by the Secretary of State's visit to the area. The Government's desire to reflect in its foreign policy the dual heritage of Canada found expression in the continued consolidation of links with *francophone* countries of Africa, through the exchange of visits and the broadening of diplomatic contacts. Canadian concern about the consequences of the civil war in Nigeria, and in particular its tragic impact on innocent civilians, continued to play a prominent part in Canada's approach to African problems; the Government pursued through all available channels its efforts to bring about more effective delivery of relief supplies to the victims of the conflict.

Visiting Iran, Israel and the United Arab Republic in November, the Secretary of State for External Affairs had the opportunity both to exchange views on the current situation in the Middle East and to consolidate the amicable bilateral relations of Canada with the governments concerned. The discussions in Tehran confirmed broad similarities of approach by Canada and Iran to various international problems, including those of the Middle East, and underlined the promise Iran holds as a significant trading partner in the future. The Minister's tour further strengthened bilateral ties with Israel, whose right to exist in peace and security in the region the Canadian Government has constantly reaffirmed since the inception of the state. The visit to Cairo was an important attestation to the value Canada attaches to the progressive consolidation of relations with the United Arab Republic, a developing nation with a vital role to play in Middle Eastern and world affairs.

During the year, the tensions consequent upon the Arab-Israeli dispute increased significantly. No substantial progress was made toward an equitable and lasting peace settlement, despite the efforts of the Secretary-General's special representative, Ambassador Gunnar Jarring of Sweden, and the associated four-power talks and exchanges between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. Canada continued to give its full support to these efforts by the United Nations and the major powers to bring about a solution on the basis of Security Council Resolution 242 of November 1967. The Canadian Government was the third-largest financial contributor to the humanitarian work of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), providing for the 1969-70 fiscal