

Faced with the worsening famine and the continuing economic crisis in Africa, Canada and Canadians contributed generously to relief and rehabilitation efforts. An Emergency Co-ordinator was appointed by the Secretary of State for External Affairs to mobilize and co-ordinate both government and private sector efforts, and a Special Fund was created. Over \$35 million was raised by individuals and non-governmental organizations for African relief. For its part, the Canadian government's total aid contribution to Africa amounted to about \$810 million in 1984-85. Canada strongly supported the UN Declaration on Africa at the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly and pledged \$100 million over three years to the World Bank's \$1 billion Special Facility for Sub-Saharan Africa.

## The Commonwealth

In a period marked by strains on multilateralism, the 49 Commonwealth countries have been attempting to strengthen the UN system by uniting to bring their own pragmatic approach towards consensus to the larger UN forum, for example at UNESCO. At a number of Commonwealth ministerial meetings, delegates were briefed and prepared to participate more fully in subsequent larger UN conferences to exert a positive influence. These included a meeting of the ministers of health, held in Geneva before the World Health Assembly, as well as meetings of labour ministers prior to the International Labour Organization's conference and of industry ministers in connection with the UN Industrial Development Organization session in Vienna.

Particular attention was given during 1984-85 to the problems of small states by a special Commonwealth Study Group, which looked for ways in which those states' economic and political vulnerability might be reduced through enhanced regional co-operation and through other means. A number of distinguished personalities, including Geoffrey Pearson, Executive Director of the Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security, are associated with this project.

Canada was particularly active in Commonwealth affairs, acting as host for several major events. In September 1984, finance ministers met in Toronto, just before the IMF/World Bank meeting, to consider the results of the special studies commissioned on the debt crisis and possible adjustments to the international monetary system, and the Commonwealth Science Council met in Ottawa. Commonwealth ministers of youth affairs met in Cyprus in May 1984, and some weeks later in the same conference hall, Commonwealth ministers of education discussed the serious erosion in student exchanges caused by increased tuition fees, one of the major problems currently facing the organization.

Senior officials of the Commonwealth met in Barbados in December and agreed to establish an Action Group for Africa, a Nigerian-Canadian initiative which emphasized the need for long-term structural reform in agriculture.

The "unofficial Commonwealth" continued to make its own valuable contribution. Now numbering close to 300 professional and private associations, it forms a vast network around the world in virtually every human endeavour. The Commonwealth Trade Union Council and the Commonwealth Association of Museums (both currently headed by Canadians) are two organizations out of many which are offering

concrete assistance to developing member countries and forging links for the future. Along with the work at a governmental level, that of the non-governmental organizations is a continuing demonstration of the Commonwealth's adaptability and relevance in a changing world.

## La Francophonie

The most important conference of 1984-85 was the Conference of Communications Ministers of the member states of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation, held in Cairo, February 3-8, 1985, at which the communications ministers of Canada and Quebec worked in close co-operation. The discussions focused on the creation of a Francophone audiovisual network, the subject of a number of proposals and recommendations. Canada's Minister of Communications and his Quebec and New Brunswick counterparts proposed that the next Conference of Communications Ministers be held in the province of Quebec.

Two other important conferences held during the year were the Conference of Education Ministers of French-Speaking Countries in Bamako, Mali, and the Conference of Youth and Sports Ministers of French-Speaking Countries (CONFESJES) in Libreville, Gabon. Canada will participate with the 26 member states of CONFESJES in the "CONFESJES Games", an international meeting held as part of International Youth Year 1985. Canada will also host the eighteenth annual session of the CONFESJES Conference in 1987.

As in previous years, Canada provided significant support to Francophone non-governmental organizations. These included the International Federation of Teachers of French, which held its sixth world congress in Quebec City in July 1984. The Federation met with extraordinary success at this congress in terms of both the number of participants (close to 2 000) and the results.

Canada became a member of the board of directors of a newly created organization, the Centre international de Recherches, d'Échanges et de Coopération des Caraïbes et l'Amérique Latine (CIRECCA). In 1984, the Centre approved the assignment of a Canadian co-operant to its headquarters in Fort-de-France, Martinique.

## Environmental questions

The economic importance of environmental concerns was acknowledged by the leaders of the seven leading industrialized nations, including Canada, meeting at the London Summit in June 1984, when they declared: "We recognize the international dimension of environmental problems, and the role of environmental factors in economic development." This role was explored in greater detail at a meeting of the OECD later the same month, in which Canada was a major participant, and at which it was concluded that environmental factors should be given full consideration in almost all economic issues.

Summit leaders also invited ministers responsible for environmental policies to identify areas for continuing co-operation in this field, and ministers from Summit countries and representatives from the EC met in London in December. They issued a major report, *The Way Forward*, reiterating the need for integration of environmental policies into economic planning, to ensure, among other objectives,