

# Europe

It was a favourable year for realizing Canadian objectives in Europe. Partly because of an advantageous political climate, the Canadian Government was able to make significant progress towards establishing increasingly-productive relations with European countries. There was substantial growth in trade, tourism, cultural and scientific relations, investments and co-operation in environmental matters.

Canada's European partners demonstrated an increasing awareness of Canada's aspirations, its distinct identity in North America, and the value it placed on national independence and interdependence among peoples.

A Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe opened in Helsinki in July with a meeting of the foreign ministers of the 35 participating states. The Secretary of State for External Affairs of Canada was one of the participants, for European security and co-operation are of vital importance to Canada's economic and political future.

The second, or negotiating, stage of the conference began in September in Geneva, also with the full participation of a Canadian delegation. Such importance for stability and *détente* in Europe was attached to the results of these negotiations that the delegations decided to exchange their views in detail on the various subjects of the conference before starting to draft documents early in 1974. The various approaches to achieving greater security were so different that many months of intensive negotiation would be needed to arrive at a mutually-satisfactory and successful outcome.

It was in this spirit that Canada joined with other members of the Atlantic Alliance to work towards the reduction of military strength in Central Europe within the framework of the Vienna talks aimed at Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions. A major achievement of the year was the fact that the NATO and Warsaw Pact countries were able to come together in October 1973 to discuss questions as complex as they were vital to the security of all the countries concerned.

In the context of multilateral relations with European countries as a whole it should also be mentioned that in July Canada became a full member of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and took steps to increase its role within UNESCO through full-time membership in the regional European group.

On the Western Europe political scene, "constructive dialogue" between Canada and the members of the European Community — the "Nine" — was a highlight. The Canadian Government's efforts to promote better understanding between Canada and the Nine were reinforced by such programs as:

- the study of Canada's relations with the expanded European Community by the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, published in July;
- the successful symposium in Ottawa in November on Canada and the European Community, organized by the Canadian Institute of International Affairs in co-operation with the Department of External Affairs and the Commission of the European Community. (The conference coincided with the visit of Sir Christopher Soames, vice-president of the Commission, and his chief advisers).

As a result of Canada's efforts to strengthen and vitalize relations with its European partners, the Nine invited Canada in November to express views on the future and scope of relations between Canada and the European Community. Canada informed the Nine of its interest and launched an intensive study of the subject.

The process of exchange and exploration with the "Six" and subsequently with the Nine had, therefore, been in progress for some time when, in April, the American Secretary of State announced a proposal to revitalize the Atlantic Alliance. Canada had to determine the best way to pursue its European policy, taking into account the evolution of the situations in North America and Europe and at the same time contributing to the common goal of strengthening ties between members of the Atlantic Alliance.