

the Caribbean. A most conspicuous recent example was the launching of the Caribbean Group for Co-operation in Economic Development, associated with the World Bank. This group, which met first in Washington last June, was successful not only in attracting new outside donors but also in providing greater precision on the needs of the region, as seen by Caribbean governments themselves. As a result, informal co-ordination of the efforts of those within the Caribbean and those outside will now be undertaken to promote economic development of this area in a more orderly and effective fashion.

In many respects, Canada's motivation in signing this agreement today is the same as that which inspired our participation in the Caribbean Group in Washington. Our interest in the economic progress of Caribbean states, both Commonwealth and non-Commonwealth, has been evident in the past; but we want to confirm that this interest continues and our new agreement does just that.

The agreement comes as a number of new island nations enter history. Dominica recently attained independence, and I take this occasion through my colleague from Dominica to wish the people of his country happiness and prosperity for the future. Several more Commonwealth Caribbean countries will emerge shortly.

Independent they are, or will be, as is Canada, but we are all linked through our Commonwealth association. This association provides an added reason why Canada looks forward to closer co-operation with CARICOM governments in future. We accept, as Commonwealth countries, that we must share, contributing as we can, in the resolution of difficult world problems affecting all of us.

I have had occasion during the past year to meet with my CARICOM foreign minister colleagues, in New York and elsewhere — including this morning —, to exchange views on such difficult international questions as southern Africa, on such common problems as the law-of-the-sea negotiations, and on mutual objectives in North-South discussions. In the broadest international sense, then, agreements of the kind we are signing today both bolster and contribute to the sense of solidarity that binds Commonwealth members.

At a different level, that of the individual, this agreement will, I think, be particularly welcome to what is now a large and growing segment of Canadian society — those of Caribbean origin. Some 15,000 or so immigrants from CARICOM states have entered Canada in each of the last few years. They enrich Canadian society beyond the weight of their numbers, and I am pleased that there is now a new formal yet flexible tie between their new and their old homelands.

There are other people-to-people links between CARICOM and Canada. Students from the Caribbean have found a welcome in Canadian universities, and as a result have developed ties with Canada of a lasting character even though they returned to take their place in your societies. And Canadians migrate seasonally to your beautiful beaches and countryside, sometimes comprising the largest segment of your tourist population.

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