

Cuba. The Brazilian agriculture minister visited Canada in 1977 and the Mexican foreign minister led the Mexican delegation to the third meeting of the Canada-Mexico ministerial committee held in Ottawa. The Canada-Cuba joint economic committee met in Havana in June 1977 and it was expected the Canada-Brazil joint economic committee would meet in Brasilia in the first half of 1978.

During 1977 Canadian trade with Latin America increased slightly in comparison with 1976. Canadian imports from Latin America in 1977 amounted to \$2,200 million (\$1,938 million in 1976) while Canadian exports to the area amounted to \$1,587 million (\$1,480 million in 1976). Canada's trade deficit increased from \$457 million in 1976 to \$613 million in 1977, largely because of higher costs of imported oil.

In 1977 Canada, through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), continued to provide substantial assistance to various countries of the region to help them, particularly the poorer countries, achieve their social and economic development objectives. The program expanded during 1977 and CIDA devoted a larger proportion of its global resources to Latin America. CIDA also participated in multilateral regional projects with a variety of inter-American institutions.

At the multilateral level, Canada is an active member of many inter-American organizations, namely: the Pan American Institute of Geography and History, the Pan American Health Organization, the Inter-American Institute for Agricultural Sciences, the Inter-American Statistical Institute, the Inter-American Centre for Tax Administrators, the Centre for Latin American Monetary Studies and the Postal Union of the Americas and Spain. Canada supports various technical and professional inter-American organizations. In April 1978, Canada hosted the annual meeting of the Inter-American Bank.

3.6.2.10 Canada and Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and the Far East

Canada and Europe. Canadian activities in 1977 in Western Europe were directed toward the development and strengthening of political, economic and commercial relations. In political matters, co-operation was actively promoted through regional and international conferences, official visits and ministerial meetings. Exchanges centred chiefly on peacekeeping, the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes, increased security in Europe and improvement of East-West relations. In the commercial and economic sphere, Canada's participation in the London economic summit and active part in the North-South conference, the meetings of joint economic commissions and exchanges of industrial missions, all resulted in a strengthening of ties with Western Europe. The framework agreement for commercial and economic co-operation with the European communities spearheads Canada's third-option policy in Europe.

Canada and the Eastern European states have in recent years increased trade, scientific and technological co-operation as well as cultural exchanges. Canada participated with the 35 signatory states of the Helsinki Final Act in the follow-up meeting of the conference on co-operation and security in Europe which was held in Belgrade, Yugoslavia from October 4, 1977 to March 9, 1978.

In January 1978 a Canada-USSR mixed commission met in Ottawa to draw up a new program of scientific, academic and cultural exchanges and co-operation for 1978-79. This is the fourth program of exchanges under the terms of a Canada-USSR general exchanges agreement since it was signed in Ottawa in 1971. With other Eastern European countries Canada has worked for mutually beneficial bilateral relations through resident diplomatic missions in Prague, Warsaw, Belgrade, Budapest and Bucharest and through non-resident ambassadors accredited to Bulgaria and the German Democratic Republic.

Canada and the Middle East. Canada has consistently attempted to follow a policy of balance and objectivity between the parties to the Arab-Israeli dispute. Over the years, Canada has supported the efforts of the UN Relief and Works Agency to alleviate the plight of Palestine refugees and has contributed to the maintenance of the ceasefire that followed the war of October 1973 by providing the largest national contingent to the United Nations peacekeeping forces.