

through membership in NATO have been strengthened in recent years through economic, trade and commercial relations. This development has taken place in parallel with the growth of the European Economic Community (EEC), which has become the world's largest trading entity.

Western Europe is an area of major importance to Canada in all matters: political consultations, security, co-operation in development, science, technology, communications, cultural exchanges, tourism, immigration and many others.

Canada and the Eastern European states have in recent years maintained links for trade, scientific and technological co-operation as well as cultural and sports exchanges. Main trade clients in this region have been the Soviet Union, Poland, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia.

21.4.5 The Middle East

In recent years, Canada has increased the number of its diplomatic missions in the Middle East in response to the area's growing significance in trade, industrial development and political activity. Despite unsettled conditions in some areas, Canada has consistently attempted to follow a policy of balance and objectivity between the parties to the Arab-Israeli dispute.

Many of the major oil-exporting countries of the Middle East have put their increased revenues to use by expanding their developmental projects. In addition, some have sought to employ a part of their surpluses in assisting other countries that lack such valuable resources. These countries are becoming more aware of Canada's potential as a reliable supplier not only of traditional but also of more sophisticated goods and services. Saudi Arabia is one of Canada's largest markets in the area.

21.4.6 Africa

Direct relations were established with former British colonies in Africa as they became independent members of the Commonwealth. Increasing contacts and diplomatic relations with the newly independent French-language African states soon followed. Canada now maintains diplomatic relations with almost all the independent African states through resident Canadian missions in several countries, most of them having dual or multiple accreditation. The development of diplomatic and commercial relations has been accompanied by a significant and growing program of Canadian development assistance to Africa. There has also been growth in trade, technical assistance and cultural exchanges.

21.4.7 Asian and Pacific region

Japan is Canada's second largest national trading partner. Over the past decade vigorous efforts have been made to enhance the Canada-Japan relationship. A framework for economic co-operation and a cultural agreement provided mechanisms through

which these efforts have been channelled. Contacts across the broad front of political, economic, cultural, academic and media relations have intensified to the advantage of both nations.

China's modernization plans provide substantial opportunities for the development of increased export trade from Canada. China has embarked on an unprecedented program to attain equality with the industrialized countries. This aspect of Canada-China relations was highlighted by the January 1984 visit to Canada by China's Premier, Zhao Ziyang. Canada was among the first of the western democracies to officially recognize the People's Republic of China. Cultural and scientific exchanges with China continue apace, and Chinese scholars are admitted for advanced training at selected institutions in Canada.

Canada-Korea relations have continued to develop in parallel with the growth of the Korean economy. Trade between these two countries increased by large percentages in recent years.

Canada's bilateral relations with the individual countries of South East Asia feature both development assistance and commercial interest. A further dimension has been added in the evolution of Canada's relationship with the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines and recently Brunei have, through their participation in ASEAN, indicated an increased willingness to co-operate for their mutual benefit. In formal meetings with ASEAN representatives since 1976 Canada expressed interest and support for this organization in its efforts to promote broad regional development and increase stability in the area. A joint co-operation meeting took place in 1983, with another scheduled for 1984. ASEAN post-ministerial meetings are held each year for discussions on items of mutual interest.

Relations with Australia and New Zealand are deeply rooted in similar institutional, legislative and judicial experience as well as in shared problems and common action over several generations. More recently, new and rapidly developing mutual interests have arisen over a wide range of government activity including domestic issues, the export of uranium and nuclear safeguards, the exploration and marketing of raw materials and multilateral trade questions. Trade with Australia and New Zealand is mostly in manufactured goods.

India's gathering economic strength and geopolitical significance are factors in the formulation of Canadian foreign policy in Asia. Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka have received substantial Canadian support in aid and developmental projects. Fundamental to the pursuit of specific Canadian policy concerns is the continuing political dialogue with countries in the area.