

is likely to assume even greater importance. This country maintains close bilateral relations with Britain and France in particular, as well as with most other Western European countries, and has resident diplomatic missions in almost all of them. Canada is also, along with a number of Western European countries, an active member of NATO, OECD and wider international associations such as GATT and the Economic Commission for Europe of the United Nations. In view of the increasing economic and political importance that the Common Market is assuming for Canada, the Canadian government has been discussing with European Economic Community (EEC) member countries means of strengthening its economic relations through co-operation with the EEC in the field of industrial development.

Canada has a substantial interest in developing better relations with Eastern Europe. Increased trade, scientific and technological co-operation and cultural exchanges, and a strengthening détente in Europe have all been factors in this new situation. The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, which opened in Helsinki in July 1973 and in which Canada has taken an active part, should be an important step in developing détente through increased exchanges and contacts.

A new era in Canadian-Soviet relations, based on a more candid and friendly atmosphere and on the principle of mutual benefit, was opened in 1971 with the Protocol on Consultations, the Agreement on Co-operation in the Industrial Application of Science and Technology, and the General Exchanges Agreement, which provide for regular and long-term co-operation between Canada and the USSR. At the same time, Canada has been pursuing improved and mutually beneficial relations with the other Eastern European countries. At present, Canada has resident diplomatic missions in Moscow, Prague, Warsaw, Belgrade, and Budapest and maintains diplomatic relations with Romania and Bulgaria through non-resident ambassadors.

**Canada and the Middle East.** The renewal of full-scale hostilities in the Middle East in October 1973 brought to an end the uneasy truce which had prevailed in that region since 1967. The Secretary of State for External Affairs said that Canada was prepared to participate in a new peacekeeping effort if it would open the way for a negotiated settlement on the basis of a United Nations Security Council resolution. On October 22, the Security Council approved a resolution co-sponsored by the US and the USSR, calling for a ceasefire and the commencement of negotiations leading to a just and lasting settlement. On October 25 the Security Council authorized the formation of a UN peacekeeping force. The Canadian Parliament subsequently approved the Secretary-General's request that Canada provide the logistic component of the force. About 1,000 Canadians took up duties along the ceasefire line between Egyptian and Israeli forces, and, later, in the disengagement zone negotiated between the two countries. Following the disengagement of the Syrian/Israeli front about 150 of these troops were reassigned to the UN Disengagement Observer Force stationed on the Golan Heights.

Prior to the war Canada had actively campaigned to increase her representation in the Middle East. Diplomatic relations were opened with Saudi Arabia in May 1973. It was also decided to establish full diplomatic relations with the countries of the Persian Gulf, and with the Yemen Arab Republic and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. Canada now has diplomatic relations with every Middle Eastern country.

Both Canadian exports to and imports from most Middle East countries rose significantly during 1973 and the first half of 1974 and prospects are excellent for continued rapid growth. A Canadian trade delegation led by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce visited Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Iran in the spring of 1974. The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources also visited the region early in 1974.

In August 1974, HRH King Hussein of Jordan visited Canada and held talks with the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

Canada continued to give substantial support to the work of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in Palestine. The Canadian contribution was increased by \$500,000 in 1973, bringing our total annual contribution to \$2.05 million and making Canada the third largest contributor to this organization.

**Canada and Africa.** Direct relations were first 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-speaking African states soon followed as a result of the increasing emphasis the Canadian government placed on French culture in