

this country as well as the important role played by francophone African countries in their continental affairs. Canada now maintains diplomatic relations with almost all the independent African states and through resident Canadian missions in 15 countries. The development of bilateral diplomatic and commercial relations has been accompanied by a significant and growing program of Canadian aid to Africa. This program directed more than \$113 million in aid to the African continent in 1972-73, and will contribute \$131 million in 1973-74.

Canada and the Asian and Pacific Region. For many years Canada has had important links with a number of countries in Asia. During the past decade Canadians have become increasingly aware of their position as a Pacific as well as an Atlantic nation. With the development of modern transportation and communications, the Pacific Ocean has ceased to be a barrier and, because of the expanding interest in Asia and its importance, contacts between Canadians and the peoples of Asia and the Pacific are growing rapidly in number and variety. At the present time Canada has diplomatic relations with 24 countries in the Asian and Pacific region and has resident diplomatic missions in 15 countries.

Although some of these contacts have developed as a result of historic and traditional ties, as in the case of Australia and New Zealand, many new contacts have been economic in character. Trade has increased and assistance for development has been provided. The importance of Asia as a trading area is evident from the emergence of Japan by 1973 as Canada's second largest bilateral trading partner, ahead of Britain and after the US, with trade in 1973 amounting to more than \$2.8 billion. The potential for further trade in the region has also been recognized by trade fairs in the People's Republic of China (the most recent being a solo electronics fair in Shanghai in 1974), by the conclusion of a trade agreement with that country in October 1973, by agreements on bilateral trading preferences with New Zealand and Australia in 1973, and through economic consultations with India in November 1973 which grew out of Prime Minister Gandhi's visit to Canada in June of that year. An increasing number of Canadian trade missions, both official and private, also visit the area.

Canada's general policy of diversification of its international relationships is reflected in the growing number of meetings between Canadian Ministers and officials and their counterparts in the region. Canada's interest in co-operation and development is promoted through participation in the Colombo Plan, membership in the Asian Development Bank and Canada's official observer status with the UN Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific. A significant proportion of Canada's total development assistance is provided to the developing countries of this region. India has always been the largest recipient of such aid, although this long-standing relationship came under severe strain after India exploded a nuclear device in May 1974.

For more than a quarter-century parts of Asia have been a focus of tension and conflict. Canada has participated in various UN efforts to restore or maintain peace in South Asia, Korea and Indonesia. Beginning in 1954, Canada was a member of the International Commissions for Supervision and Control (ICSC) in Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. This came to an end in Cambodia at the end of 1969 with the adjournment of the Cambodia Commission, and in Vietnam with the adjournment of the Vietnam ICSC in early 1973 followed by Canada's withdrawal, after six months' participation, from the present International Commission of Control and Supervision in Vietnam on July 31, 1973. In Laos, it ended for all practical purposes with the withdrawal from Vientiane on June 15, 1974 of the Canadian Delegation to the Laos ICSC which was established by the Geneva agreement of 1962. Canada, however, despite its disengagement from truce supervisory roles in Indochina, continues to take an active diplomatic interest in the area and remains ready to contribute to economic rehabilitation when peace comes to the area.

Canada and the Asian Development Bank. Canada is a member of the Asian Development Bank, established in 1966 with Articles of Agreement patterned broadly after those of the World Bank and other international financial institutions. The Bank's subscribed capital stock is US(1966)\$1,005.4 million of which one half was paid in over the five-year period 1966-70. The balance of member-country subscriptions remains as a callable guarantee against which the Bank may sell its bonds on world capital markets. Asian regional countries, including Japan, Australia and New Zealand, have subscribed US\$625.4 million and non-regional countries have subscribed the remaining US\$380 million. Canada has paid US\$12.5 million to cover the paid-in portion of its original subscription of US\$25 million. The Bank approved a