



Statements and Speeches

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GLOBAL POPULATION PROBLEMS

A Statement by the Honourable Jeanne Sauv , Minister of the Environment, to the World Population Conference, Bucharest, [August 20, 1974].

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We are meeting at a time when we are increasingly conscious that mankind is having only limited success in managing the global forces that influence its very survival. The continued existence of the human species has always depended on its ability to adapt to changing circumstances. Indeed, in this interdependent world the price of not adapting is becoming increasingly dear.

The global problems of food shortage and drought, inflation and disarray in the international monetary system, widespread poverty and intensified pressures on a finite environment seem to have out-paced man's capacity to find solutions. We are here in Bucharest as part of a larger effort to confront these issues. This effort has included the International Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm, and the special session of the General Assembly last April. It includes the Law of the Sea Conference in Caracas and the forthcoming Conference on Food and Human Settlements.

Just as the population question cannot and must not be seen in isolation from related questions of development, food and resources, so this World Population Conference must assume the character of the broadest kind of political conference, one that complements parallel efforts in other fields, and whose main concern is improvement of the welfare of mankind.

Our subject is people - not simply their global numbers but, more important, the quality of their lives. The fact that this conference is being held confirms the deep concern of the international community with these dimensions of mankind's problems and with the fact that they have not previously been dealt with at the international political level. A political conference on population was unthinkable ten years ago. Yet hard realities on population trends and prospects have now made political action an imperative.

Population trends

The most striking aspect of these trends is that world population,
