

STATEMENT OF THE MEETING OF LEGAL AND POLICY EXPERTS

Introduction

In June 1988, Canada hosted an international atmospheric conference in Toronto entitled "The Changing Atmosphere: Implications for Global Security". At the opening of the conference, the Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney, spoke strongly in favour of a concerted international effort to achieve concrete progress in dealing with this mounting environmental concern. He expressed his hope that the international community could develop, by 1992, an international accord or elements thereof for the protection of the atmosphere. As a step toward this goal, a Meeting of Legal and Policy Experts was held in Ottawa on February 20 to 22, 1989.

The purpose of the Meeting of Experts was:

- (a) to develop further the legal and institutional framework for dealing with existing and emerging atmospheric problems and, where possible, to agree on principles that might form the basis of an umbrella framework convention for the protection of the atmosphere and for a convention on climate change;
- (b) to identify areas where, for legal, technical or scientific reasons, a consensus may not be achievable and to suggest ways for overcoming such obstacles; and
- (c) to develop a series of recommendations for future action, including one to the effect that the report of the meeting and draft principles be forwarded to a qualified multilateral organization for future consideration.

The Meeting of Experts was attended by some 80 legal and policy experts in their personal capacity, from government, non-government (including the World Meteorological Organization and the United Nations Environment Programme), and academic institutions. Participants included a broad spectrum of experts from developed and developing countries and from every continent.

The Meeting of Experts recommended that an international convention or conventions with appropriate protocols are needed as a means to ensure rapid international action to protect the atmosphere and limit the rate of climate change. It also recommended that protocols to limit carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere are urgently required, either within the framework of a Convention on Climate Change or a Convention on the