

Canada is a member of the UN Commission on Transnational Corporations and chaired the fourth session of the Commission in Vienna in May. Work on a code of conduct for transnational corporations continued throughout the year. In addition, Canada participated in the work of an ECOSOC working group that is drafting an international agreement on the problem of illicit payments in international commercial transactions. Within the OECD framework, Canada was involved in dealing with issues connected with the 1976 Declaration on International Investment and Multinational Enterprises, including the continuing study of discriminatory treatment of foreign direct investment.

Efforts continued within the OECD to promote intergovernmental co-operation in dealing with restrictive business practices. Canada is also participating in an UNCTAD group of experts that is drafting a set of principles and guidelines for the control of restrictive business practices in international commerce.

Multilateral environmental policy

Canada's purposes in participating in the environmental activities of the United Nations, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization include: the enhancement of its capacity for environmental management through exchange of information on policies and technologies with other Western nations; the persistence of joint efforts to resolve environmental problems of an international character; the promoting of the development of international environmental law and the encouraging of environmentally sound and appropriate development in the Third World. The year 1978 proved to be one of significant progress towards some of these goals.

Canada derived considerable benefit from exchanges of both policy and technical information in NATO's Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society. It was also a strong proponent in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development of a broad new program, launched in 1978, to harmonize the testing and control of toxic substances by member countries.

With the UN Economic Commission for Europe now serving as the focal point for action to implement the environmental provisions of the Helsinki Final Act, intensive negotiations took place to develop East-West co-operation on such subjects as long-range transport of air pollutants and exchange of information on low-waste and non-waste technologies.

Canada continued to provide leadership in the United Nations Environment Program with a view to enhancing the co-ordination and "catalytic" role of that organization within the UN system. The year witnessed the tabling in the General Assembly of principles of conduct to guide the management of natural resources shared by two or more