

(UNCED), the Earth Summit which met in Rio de Janeiro just six months ago. There again, representatives of your department and of Canada made a contribution of which you can be proud. I am very pleased that one of the most distinguished of these is in this room: Ambassador John Bell, who led the Canadian delegation on so many occasions and who was senior adviser to the Prime Minister at the conference. He also performed such important roles as negotiating the tough financial issues.

Arthur Campeau, a newcomer to the field of foreign affairs, also distinguished himself. Arthur and John were a powerful team to support Prime Minister Mulroney in his presence at the conference.

It was, by any objective standard, a remarkable political event. Never before had so many heads of state and government come together. Unprecedented, too, was the broad engagement of people and their organizations in preparation for, as well as participation in, the conference and the accompanying People's Summit at the Global Forum. The presence of more than twice the number of media representatives than had ever before been accredited to a world conference ensured that people everywhere were aware of what was happening in Rio and alerted to its importance for them.

In a little more than two years, the preparatory committee of all United Nations (UN) member states developed a broad range of measures that were put before the conference, and John can testify to the long nights of tough negotiations that looked, at many times, as though they would not yield a result.

A great deal of attention has been focused on the areas of controversy and disagreement, and they were many. But in the final analysis, leaders from some 180 countries at Rio reached agreement on the most comprehensive and far-reaching set of measures ever approved by the nations of the world. Despite some significant shortcomings and disappointments, the Declaration of Rio and Agenda 21 provide a framework and the essential elements for a new global partnership that can launch us on the pathway to a more secure and sustainable future.