



# Bulletin

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## THE FAO AND THE PROBLEMS OF DEVELOPMENT

*The following is a partial text of an address to the fifteenth session of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Rome on November 11 by Canada's Minister of Agriculture, Mr. H.A. Olson:*

...My Government ranks aid as one of its highest priorities. In recent years our program has grown in size, and during the current fiscal year \$338 million (Cdn) has been made available for developmental assistance. This is more than twice the amount appropriated five years ago.

As it has grown, we have renewed our efforts to increase the effectiveness of our assistance in order that it will make the greatest possible impact. As part of an overall review of Canadian foreign policy, particular attention has been paid to a comprehensive appraisal of the volume, terms and conditions of Canadian aid.

At the present time, Canada is giving full consideration to the findings of the Pearson Commission and is looking forward to the finding of the capacity study of the United Nations system undertaken by Sir Robert Jackson. These are particularly timely reports, which we hope will lead to initiatives towards new development programs.

In this connection, the FAO has been working on its development strategy for agriculture by establishing five areas of concentration. We feel this action is a useful first step in establishing guidelines for its own activities, as well as for the agricultural development programs of both donor and recipient countries. My delegation looks forward to the further discussion of the areas during the course of the Conference....

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### PROGRESS TOO SLOW

Even though, as pointed out in the Pearson Report, understanding of the problems of development has grown and past approaches have been modified and co-ordinated, and better results secured, I still sense a feeling of frustration and impatience among the developing countries at the slow progress to date.

This feeling is also shared by my country, when we note that, after nearly 25 years of UN effort, food production in the developing countries fails to keep pace with growth in population. Though there have been gains in recent years, as pointed out in the current report on the state of food and agriculture, we are far from having solved the imbalance between population increase and food-production growth.

On the other hand, the FAO, in other reports, has drawn attention to the renewed accumulation during the past two years in high-income countries of surplus stocks of some temperate-zone agricultural commodities - especially wheat and dairy products. It is indicated that the finding of the solution rests with the countries producing these surplus stocks - and I hasten to add that a unilateral solution benefits no one in the long run. Other FAO reports point to future surpluses of cereals in some developing nations. We have difficulty visualizing the existence of