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THE CANADIAN DELEGATION AT THE RESUMED 8TH SESSION OF THE LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, Flora MacDonald, announced that she will head the Canadian Delegation to the resumed eighth session of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea which is to take place in New York from July 19 to August 24, 1979. The Minister of Justice and Attorney General, Jacques Flynn, and the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, James McGrath, will be alternate heads of the delegation. High Commissioner J. Alan Beesley will be Deputy Head of the Delegation.

The resumed session will follow up on the substantial progress achieved in Geneva this spring, with the declared conference objective of concluding the negotiations. The focus of the session will be primarily on the unresolved issues relating to the establishment of an international system for the exploitation of deep sea-bed resources.

In addition, there will be active negotiations on the question of revenue sharing concerning the resources of the continental margin beyond 200 miles, the delimitation of maritime boundaries between adjacent or opposite states, marine scientific research, settlement of disputes and the preamble and final clauses of the future Convention on the Law of the Sea.

During the first part of the eighth session there were active negotiations on all of these issues and, in certain major areas, the conference was able to move much closer to consensus. This progress is reflected in the revision of the Informal Composite Negotiating Text issued in Geneva on April 28, 1979 (ICNT/REV. 1). This revised draft treaty incorporates new or amended articles on a wide range of important issues which had hitherto blocked progress in the negotiations, such as the definition of the outer edge of the continental margin; the rights of access of land-locked and geographically disadvantaged states to the living resources of economic zones in the same region or sub-region; the settlement of disputes relating to the exercise of coastal state sovereign rights over fisheries in the economic zone; the protection of the marine environment and the nickel production ceiling. The inclusion in the revised