

will be undertaking a task of critical importance both for the development of international law and for the maintenance of peace among nations.

Rules of law on the breadth of the territorial sea and of fishing limits will complete the code of maritime law adopted at the First Conference. These new rules must take into consideration the political and economic realities of our time. If the new Conference does not give birth to such rules, the international community may have to face the existence of chaotic conditions where states decide what laws their interests require without regard to the interests of other states and the need for an international régime of law. The present situation will tend to worsen with the passage of time and may create sources of increasing international friction, and a real impediment to friendly and peaceful relations between states. It is therefore important that all nations attending the Second Conference on the Law of the Sea do their utmost to ensure that the Conference succeeds in agreeing upon uniform principles of law to take their place in the international code of law of the sea.

The inability of the First Conference on the Law of the Sea to reach agreement on a rule of international law to govern the breadth of the territorial sea and the fishing jurisdiction of coastal states should not occasion pessimism for the success of the forthcoming Conference. We all know that, in addition to its other impressive achievements, reassuring progress, even on these two matters, was made at the earlier meeting. The Conference demonstrated clearly that the area of disagreement was not large; it was almost unanimous in the view that the extent of a coastal state's fishing jurisdiction should extend to, but should not exceed, twelve miles; in addition, there was a widespread conviction that the principle of the freedom of the high seas must be maintained.

The Second Geneva Conference will thus meet with several advantages: the principal areas of disagreement have been defined; states have now had a fair period of time in which to study the