

achievements were largely the product of lengthy negotiations in the Committee of the Whole, in the Working Group and during the many informal meetings in which the Canadian delegation took an active part.

### III RESOLUTION I: THE ENVIRONMENT IN 1982: RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

#### The Decade Past

17. While governments tended to take credit for efforts toward implementing the Stockholm Declaration and Action Plan, they generally agreed that the environment remains in a sorry state. The causes for making only limited progress toward the desired goals were attributed variously to such factors as the excessive ambitiousness and generality of the aims of Stockholm, the persistent inadequacies of measures to redress environmental problems associated with poverty and underdevelopment, inadequate understanding of the long-term benefits of environmental protection, the lack of long-range planning and coordination of international efforts, the use of critical resources for armaments rather than enhancing the quality of life and the current difficulties facing the world economy. The session took some satisfaction from positive achievements such as the evolution of the World Conservation Strategy, the creation and operation of UNEP's monitoring and coordinating functions, the heightening of environmental awareness and the creation of governmental environmental machinery but delegates also acknowledged that serious environmental problems remained to be solved, such as resource depletion, deforestation, desertification and pollution.

#### The Decade Ahead: Trends and Priority Action

18. The session devoted more detailed attention to prospective action than it did to an evaluation of the past. The significance of the prospective view in the resolution on "The Environment in 1982: Retrospect and Prospect" is that it distilled much documentation and discussion into a compact statement which identified major trends and problems in ten areas of the environment and linked these to priorities for action, suggested what UNEP's basic orientation and objectives should be, summarized the emergence of new environmental perceptions since Stockholm and reiterated generally acceptable views concerning institutional arrangements for UNEP. (The ten areas identified were the atmosphere, oceans, water, lithosphere, terrestrial biota and bioproductive systems, population and human settlements, health, energy, industry and other economic development and peace, security and the environment.)

19. The priority actions identified to address major environmental trends and problems reflected widely shared assessments of the state of the environment. Difficulties occurred, however, with respect to the extent of the problems to be legitimately addressed by UNEP (e.g. whether to include such questions as population and human settlements or peace and security since these fall primarily within the mandates of other UN agencies). Concern with the excessive range of subjects assigned to UNEP spurred attempts to define a more