



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
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THE PROBLEM OF MARINE POLLUTION

A Statement by the Honourable Jack Davis, Minister of the Environment, to the UN Conference on the Human Environment, Stockholm, June 14, 1972.

Canada sponsored a proposal that was reflected in amended Recommendation 233, which proposed action by governments to prevent ocean dumping, and in particular to make every effort to conclude an ocean-dumping convention. My Government wholeheartedly supports this recommendation. The draft articles for ocean dumping, referred to in this recommendation, represent the basis for an effective dumping convention -- from both an environmental and a jurisdictional point of view. Canada will co-operate fully in every effort to carry forward this constructive initiative taken by the United States.

Canada also sponsored a series of proposals on marine-pollution control principles and ocean-management objectives. We are gratified at the support that has been given to these proposals. Taken together, they form the basis for the future development of international law for the preservation and enhancement of the marine environment. Action will, of course, have to be taken at the 1973 Law of the Sea Conference and the 1973 Inter-governmental Maritime Consultative Organization Conference. Canada will do everything it can to co-operate with other states to develop the law on a basis that does not do violence to the interests of any state, be it flag state or coastal state. This is, in our view, the basis of the recommendations contained in Recommendation 239, and it is for this reason that my Government has worked so hard to gain their acceptance.

It has been the consistent view of the Canadian Government that what is required is a comprehensive multi-disciplinary integrated approach to the future development of international environmental law. It is our considered view that Recommendations 233 and 239, taken together, point the way to such an approach.

We have approached this range of problems with determination and we have pressed our proposals with vigour. We have at the same time taken every opportunity to co-operate with other governments, many of which represent countries with interests different from Canada. We are a coastal state, not a major maritime state. We are a coastal fishing state, not a distant-water fishing state. But we recognize that other states have different interests, and that we must work together to work out mutually-acceptable accommodation. We now have the basis for such an approach.