

the limits of national jurisdiction. The nature of the regime and machinery to be established for the seabed beyond national jurisdiction had been under study for more than three years before the General Assembly was able to agree on this first concrete step towards the establishment of that regime and machinery. In essence the declaration of principles affirms as follows:

- (i) there is an area of the seabed and ocean floor which is beyond the limits of national jurisdiction and which constitutes the "common heritage of mankind";
- (ii) this area is not subject to national appropriation or claims of sovereignty;
- (iii) the exploration and exploitation of the resources of the area shall be governed by an international regime and international machinery to be established, and shall be carried out for the benefit of mankind as a whole, taking into particular consideration the interests and needs of the developing countries;
- (iv) the area shall be reserved for exclusively peaceful purposes.

The declaration of principles for the seabed beyond national jurisdiction is not legally binding but represents the consensus of the international community and is intended to serve as the foundation and framework for the proposed international seabed regime and machinery. Canada played an active role in securing agreement on the declaration and was the first western state to signify acceptance of these principles at the 25th Session of the General Assembly. At the same time Canada made clear that the declaration did not necessarily meet its position on all points of detail but