

CANADIAN INTERVENTION on AGENDA 21
... Statement by Arthur Campeau, Canada

Mr. Chairman, we have listened with great interest to the presentations by Secretariat staff on its views on Agenda 21 over the last two and during this PrepCom and have also read very carefully the many secretariat documents on this subject. We have stood in awe witnessing the exponential growth in this Agenda. We appreciate, that from the UN Agency point of view, this is the definitive step in the creation of the environment/development work plans for at least the next decade. But we feel it can and must be more than information management and UN Agency work plan creation and ultimately, monitoring.

As we have said before, it is our view and, I am sure, one shared by other delegations, that global environmental and development problems are now so complex and inter-related that governments or UN Agencies alone can not adequately define with sufficient specificity the problems let alone the solutions. In short, all sectors of society must play an important role in defining both the problems and their solutions and be part of Agenda 21. We believe that management systems and work plans that secure effective citizen participation, offer our best collective opportunity for creating the required linkages between environment and development.

We, like Maurice Strong, see Agenda 21 as one of the major outputs of Rio. We have offered individual, and often our collective, Country concerns on each of the sectoral Agenda 21 documents presented at this session. We are very concerned about priority setting. Of particular concern to CANZ is how we are going to set these priorities both now and after June 1992? How will the priority setting mechanisms established within the context of UNCED relate to the priority setting mechanisms of other UN sanctioned fora or Agencies? What mechanisms will we be able to use to resolve difference of views? We believe that the Secretariat should look into these questions and offer some views for consideration at Prepcom IV.

Agenda 21 must be acknowledged as an opportunity for each sector of society to undertake a holistic introspection of itself, its goals, its aspirations and most importantly its responsibilities and an opportunity to spell out the remediation measures it will pursue. If we can agree to do this, we will clearly be on the road to creating the new social contract for a secure world for future generations.

CANZ fully supports the concept of Agenda 21 but is concerned that the Agenda 21 up to now is being created solely by a "bottom up" approach. This approach will undoubtedly produce, in fact, has produced, a very comprehensive list of what needs to be done....