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AT PREP COM III

STATEMENT BY JOHN P. BELL, HEAD OF THE CANADIAN DELEGATION

THIRD PREPARATORY COMMITTEE OF THE UNCED

PROTECTION OF THE OCEANS AND ALL KINDS OF SEAS,
INCLUDING ENCLOSED AND SEMI-ENCLOSED SEAS, AND
COASTAL AREAS AND THE PROTECTION, RATIONAL USE
AND DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR LIVING MARINE RESOURCES

AUGUST 1991, GENEVA

Mr. Chairman,

First I would like to thank the UNCED Secretariat for the excellent documents it has prepared on the sustainable development and management of oceans and seas (PC/68, 69, 70, 71, 72 and 42/Add.6) for consideration by this PrepCom. In particular I would like to flag the documents on institutions and legal instruments, and on options for Agenda 21, which will help focus our discussions and identify concrete steps for endorsement by UNCED. These documents draw the important link between marine environmental quality and economic development opportunities, particularly in coastal areas which rely heavily on fishing, tourism and recreation, and other marine-based activities.

The health of our oceans and the effectiveness of our current efforts clearly call for a new approach to ocean management which builds on the United Nations Law of the Sea Convention and existing regional sea agreements. Particular attention should be directed to land-based sources of marine pollution, coastal zone management and the conservation and protection of living marine resources. This requires that we consider ways to improve the linkages and cooperation among international institutions active in this area. It also requires that we further identify and clarify objectives, goals, and activities worthy of further consideration by all levels of government, and along the lines of the UNCED document PC 42/Add.6 dealing with Ocean Options for Agenda 21. In this connection, coastal zone management activities have a direct influence on other issues, such as land-based sources of marine pollution.

As far as the role and actions of international organizations and institutions, Canada supports the use and strengthening of existing organizations and institutions, rather than the establishment of new ones. Canada urges the development of practical measures based on existing principles of the Law of the Sea Convention. Concrete progress must and can be achieved.