

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, together with the Honourable Ronald Basford, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, and the Honourable Roméo LeBlanc, Minister of State (Fisheries) and Acting Minister of Environment, will head the Canadian Delegation to the fifth session of the United Nations Law of the Sea Conference which is to take place in New York from August 2 to September 17, 1976. Mr. J. Alan Beesley, Q.C., Special Adviser to the Secretary of State for External Affairs on Law of the Sea, will be Deputy Head of the Delegation.

The Canadian Delegation will be composed of Members of Parliament, advisers from the Provincial Governments, representatives of the fisheries and mining industries and fishermen's unions, and officials of the interested federal departments.

It is hoped that the summer session of the Law of the Sea Conference, which is being reconvened after only a brief recess, will enable the Conference to maintain the momentum it developed at the spring session. The Revised Single Negotiating Text, which emerged from the spring session, represents a considerable improvement on many important issues over the text which had emerged from the previous session.

The Revised Text reconfirmed the 200-mile Economic Zone as a central element of the proposed convention. The part of the Revised Text dealing with the international seabed area now contains many of the basic elements necessary for a viable accommodation of interests between developing and technologically-advanced countries. It is expected that the summer session will concentrate on trying to resolve the major outstanding issues in the proposed convention. One of these is the question of whether land-locked and "geographically disadvantaged" states will have certain special rights to the fisheries resources in the Economic Zones of neighbouring states or states in the same region. The summer session will also consider the details of the system for the settlement of disputes that will arise after the proposed convention comes into force. There will also be a general debate on the contents of the preamble and final clauses of the proposed convention.

The Canadian Delegation will be working actively to ensure that the summer session takes a decisive step towards the successful conclusion of work on a comprehensive, equitable and workable Law of the Sea convention.