



Statements and Speeches

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CONFERENCE ON INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

An Address by the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, President of the Privy Council, to the Resumed Thirty-first Session of the United Nations General Assembly, New York, September 13, 1977.

...The General Assembly has before it the report of the Conference on International Economic Co-operation. The CIEC concluded its work in June, and it is now the task of this Assembly, and other international organizations, to make the best of these results. Although I was intimately involved in the work of the CIEC from its inception in December 1975 as one of the co-chairmen, I am speaking today from a Canadian perspective. I want to give you some Canadian views on the outcome of the conference and suggestions on how best we can pursue our work here.

The results of the CIEC represent a mixture of success and failure, of progress and disappointment, for all participants. What is most important, however, is that there was agreement that the conference contributed to a broader understanding of the international economic situation and that the dialogue between developed and developing countries, of which the CIEC was a part, will continue to be pursued actively, here at the United Nations and elsewhere.

In examining the results of the conference, I can see several key areas of agreement where work should be proceeding on implementation, where there should be detailed follow-up to the decisions of principle that were taken.

There was agreement that there should be a common fund, and negotiations on its purposes and operations will be pursued in the coming months under the auspices of UNCTAD (the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development). We want these talks to succeed, and shall work actively towards that end.

Important commitments were made by industrialized countries on the volume and quality of official development assistance. A \$1-billion program of special action to assist the poorest developing countries was established and is already being disbursed. As a part of its contribution to this program, Canada is cancelling over a quarter of a billion dollars in official development-assistance indebtedness of least-developed countries. Progress was made on food security and in bringing the prospect of a 500,000-ton international emergency grain-reserve closer to reality. Canada will play a major part in this effort.

In energy, agreed conclusions were reached on a broad program of national action and international co-operation aimed at transition away from oil and gas towards renewable energy resources, conservation, increased efficiency in the use of energy and the development of new resources. These conclusions acknowledge the interdependence of world energy relations.