

conomic and social progress in developing countries.

Apart from discussing preparations for the special session, the Canadian delegation was particularly interested in strengthening nuclear safeguards. At Canada's urging, the Assembly adopted a resolution affirming that all states had the right to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes but that this must be under effective and non-discriminatory safeguards. The resolution asked states to adhere to the Non-Proliferation Treaty or at least to accept other arrangements involving the application of safeguards to their complete nuclear-fuel cycle. Canada co-sponsored a resolution pressing for the successful completion of a convention banning chemical weapons, and strongly supported resolutions concerning the completion of negotiations on a comprehensive test ban and on strategic-arms limitations between the two super-powers.

North-South

Despite the disappointment of the developing countries with the outcome of the Conference on International Economic Co-operation and the breakdown of negotiations in Geneva in December on the establishment of a common fund under the integrated program for commodities, the Assembly made considerable progress in establishing a framework for future North-South discussions. There was a greater appreciation of the need to approach complex economic issues carefully, with a corresponding understanding of the need to take seriously the concerns of the industrialized democracies, particularly in the present uncertain economic circumstances. The Assembly affirmed that all negotiations of a global nature relating to the establishment of a New International Economic Order should take place within the framework of the UN system. It decided to convene a special session of the General Assembly in 1980 to assess progress in this area. It further decided to establish a committee of the whole (in effect the Second Committee meeting on a year-round basis) to prepare for this special session.

The Assembly recommended ways to strengthen the Economic and Social Council as the central forum for the discussion of economic and social issues on a global basis. ECOSOC should have shorter but more frequent subject-oriented sessions spread throughout the year. It should hold periodic meetings at the ministerial level to review major issues. It should assume direct responsibility for the performance of the functions of its subsidiary bodies, simplifying and streamlining their structure.

Except for UNICEF, the UN Environment Program and the World Food Program, the operational activities of the UN should be integrated as to their funding and administration. ECOSOC should assume a greater role in co-ordinating the work of the Specialized Agencies. The Assembly asked the Secretary-General to appoint as his deputy a Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation to provide effective leadership in this area.

After extensive negotiations, which took 18 months from the holding of the *Habitat* conference in Vancouver, the Assembly decided on a framework for international co-operation on matters of human settlement. The Assembly created a 58-member Commission on Human Settlements, on which Canada has been chosen to serve. It also created a small secretariat, named *Habitat*, Centre for Human Settlements, to bring together existing UN units, to harmonize UN human-settlements programs, and to provide a focal-point for international information and research in this field. The Centre will be located in Nairobi, where it will have close links with the UN Environment Program, but it will report directly to the Secretary-General or the new Director-General.

Human rights

Discussions in the Third Committee led to modest progress on human-rights matters. A decision on the major Western initiative to create a UN High Commissioner for Human Rights was deferred, partly because many states saw the issue as developing into East-West confrontation and preferred to avoid a vote until the atmosphere had improved. Nevertheless, the proposal gained considerable support in a short time, and there was general agreement to continue discussion in the Commission on Human Rights.

The Assembly set up a number of priorities for the international community in its approach to questions of human rights and requested the Commission on Human Rights to undertake an analysis of alternative ways within the UN system for improving the defence of these rights. Four resolutions were carried on torture and related issues, including one inviting the Commission to draft an international convention on the abolition of torture. The Assembly continued the process of drafting a convention on the elimination of discrimination against women.

Canadian delegates urged the Assembly to break away from the pattern of repeatedly criticizing a limited number of states – principally Chile, Israel and South Africa – and to look instead for abuses

*Framework
for cooperation
on questions of
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