

navigation as free from coastal state intervention as possible. They want their vessels to ply the high seas freely and to deploy their naval forces at will. These factors have led them to resist any fundamental encroachment on the principle of freedom of the seas.

On the other hand, coastal nations are demanding their fair share of the adjacent sea resources which they consider as being intrinsically related to their land domain and coastal environment. For this reason, a majority of developing coastal nations have advanced the "economic zone" concept whereby they would have full ownership of the resources, both living and mineral, in a 200-mile zone off their coastline and would be empowered to take appropriate measures for the protection of their marine environment and the regulation of scientific research within that area. Freedom of navigation and of overflight would be guaranteed in the 188-mile zone beyond the 12-mile band of territorial sea.

Lastly, there is a third group of countries, those without a coastline or with a small continental shelf — referred to respectively as the land-locked and the shelf locked countries — which advocate narrow areas of national jurisdiction over sea resources. These countries, precisely because of their special geographic circumstances, consider that their only chance of sharing in the benefits of ocean resources exploitation is to participate in the international regime to be established beyond the limits of national jurisdiction. It follows that the smaller the areas under national jurisdiction remain, the larger the international area will be and the greater the benefits accruing to them.

These three main interest groups naturally encompass a variety of views on each specific issue and in many cases national interests dictate different attitudes irrespective of group philosophy.

The Main Issues at the Law of the Sea Conference

As may be gathered from the foregoing, the main issues at the forthcoming Law of the Sea Conference will relate to the main uses that are made of the oceans and, as noted above, to the conflicting theories advanced in this respect. Two of these uses are