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THE CANADIAN DELEGATION TO THE RESUMED ELEVENTH SESSION OF THE LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Mark MacGuigan, announces that the Canadian delegation to the Eleventh Session of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, which takes place in New York from March 8 to April 30, will be under the direction of J. Alan Beesley, Q.C., Canada's Ambassador to the Conference.

This session is scheduled to be the final negotiating session of the Conference. Little progress was made at the Tenth Session while the United States conducted a review of the results of the negotiations. President Reagan has now announced that the United States will remain in the Conference but will seek changes to the provisions on deep seabed mining in the draft Law of the Sea Convention.

Canada is pleased that the United States has returned to the negotiations and that President Reagan has specifically endorsed the multilateral treaty-making process as the best means of solving Law of the Sea problems. At the same time, Canada has encouraged the United States to put forward realistic proposals for changes in the Draft Convention which would not upset the fundamental agreements achieved over the past nine years of negotiations.

Dr. MacGuigan pointed out that Canada has stressed for many years the importance of achieving a comprehensive and universal Law of the Sea Convention: the success of the Conference is important to Canada, not only in terms of our national interests as a major coastal state with a broad continental shelf but also from the broader perspective of peace and security on the oceans.

The Canadian delegation will work actively with others to conclude the negotiations at the Eleventh Session in order that the Convention might be opened for signature, in September, in Caracas.