

CANADIAN DELEGATION TO THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

(EIGHTEENTH SESSION)

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Press Office

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STATEMENT BY DR. JOHN STEWART, M.P.
ACTING CHAIRMAN OF THE CANADIAN DELEGATION
PLENARY SESSION, DECEMBER 4, 1963.

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Mr. President,

Canada has a deep and continuing interest in the work which has been done and is being done to further the cause of human rights throughout the world. This interest has been heightened by our membership on the Human Rights Commission; and we attach very great importance to its work. For this reason I should like to explain why Canada voted against the resolution which has just been adopted by this Assembly.

The United Nations in dealing with the many problems which require its attention must operate within the limits of the resources of people, time and money at its disposal. In order to do this, this organization must establish effective priorities and abide by them. Failure to do this will only reduce the effectiveness and productivity of our efforts. The General Assembly decided to give priority in 1964 to the World Conference on Trade and Development. This Conference will greatly increase the tasks of the already overburdened Secretariat in preparing the massive documentation required. Moreover, the provision of staff for conferences has become a crucial problem. Consequently, the Secretary General considered that the number of meetings in 1964 should be kept to a minimum.

The Conference on Trade and Development will require the conference facilities available in Geneva for an extended period of time. Additional problems have been presented by the proposed alterations at headquarters here, which will reduce considerably the facilities available for meetings and place an increased load on those in Geneva. For these reasons the Secretary General asked whether the functional commissions might not cancel their meetings in 1964.