

for exclusively peaceful purposes and the exploration and exploitation of its resources shall be governed by an international regime and international machinery that are to be established, and shall be carried out for the benefit of mankind as a whole, taking into particular consideration the interests and needs of the developing countries. The declaration of principles is not legally binding but represents the consensus of the international community and is intended to serve as the foundation of the proposed international seabed regime and machinery. Canada played an active role in securing agreement on the declaration and was among the first states to signify acceptance of these principles.

At the bilateral level, Canada concluded, in January 1971, two fisheries agreements with the U.S.S.R. with respect to Soviet fishing operations off the west coast. The first of these agreements provided that the Soviet fishing-fleet would move off a designated area of the high seas off Vancouver Island in return for certain port privileges and for permission for Soviet vessels to fish and conduct loading and unloading operations in designated areas of Canadian waters. The second agreement established certain provisional rules of navigation applicable to both countries off the Pacific coast of Canada and is intended to avoid the possibility of collisions and damage to fishing-gear in the region concerned.

Also at the bilateral level, Canada held talks in 1971 with all the countries pursuing traditional fishing practices in its territorial sea and fishing-zones on the east coast. An agreement was concluded with Norway on the phasing-out of Norwegian fishing operations in these areas, and a second agreement with Norway, on the conduct of sealing in the Northwest Atlantic, was ratified by the Norwegian and Canadian Governments in December 1971. The bases for possible phasing-out agreements have also been worked out with Britain, Portugal and Denmark. Negotiations also took place with France concerning both French treaty rights and traditional fisheries and a draft agreement has been worked out for submission to governments. Phasing-out negotiations with Spain are continuing.

Environmental Law

The Environmental Law Section was established in 1970. Its inclusion in the Legal Bureau of External Affairs reflects the rapid growth of public interest in environmental problems and the prevention of pollution deriving from a variety of activities having international implications. The call for appropriate measures for the prevention and control of pollution has created a need for new forms of international co-operation in both the scientific and legal fields. Both municipal environmental law and international environmental law are in a highly evolutionary state and new means, both technical and regulatory, are being sought to control human activities that give rise to the degradation of the environment.

In pursuing this role, the Environmental Law Section co-operates closely with and advises as required the Scientific Relations and Environmental Problems Division of the Department of External Affairs, which has general responsibility in the Department for environmental matters.⁽¹⁾ It also co-operates closely

(1) See Page 37.