



Statements and Speeches

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THREE PARAMOUNT CANADIAN CONCERNS: RELATIONS WITH DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE LAW OF THE SEA

A Statement by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, to the House of Commons Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence, Ottawa, March 11, 1975.

When I appeared before this Committee on October 22 last year, I dealt with the general framework of the Government's foreign policy and Canada's relations with its closest associates in the international arena. Consequently, I do not feel that I need say more at this time on the main thrusts of our foreign policy. Instead, I wish to speak about Canada's relations with the developing countries, about the United Nations and about the law of the sea.

Developing countries

Canada has long had friendly relations with its Commonwealth and *francophone* associates in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean, but it would be fair to say that a new phase is beginning in these relations. The Government's wish to put new emphasis on our relations with developing countries is motivated by a practical assessment of the international environment. It is not an emotional response to recent events at the United Nations and elsewhere.

Our reasons are as follows:

First, that is where the people are. Some three-quarters of the world's population live in developing countries; and people must eventually mean economic opportunities and political power.

Second, that is where much of the "action" is. Increasingly, the risks of confrontation, as evidenced by the so-called energy crisis, are shifting towards the resource-rich areas, although both East and West continue to concentrate their forces in Europe. The international community, in our view, will increasingly have to deal with situations of political instability, localized conflicts and other symptoms of fundamental social change in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The current efforts of Secretary Kissinger to bring about a peaceful settlement in the Middle East underlie the point I am making. We support these efforts and are ready to help in any way we can.
