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## Canada makes strong plea at Caracas for coastal states' rights

Canada's opening statement to the Law of the Sea Conference in Caracas, Venezuela, delivered on July 3, was a strong assertion of the rights and obligations of coastal states to a distance of 200 miles seaward or to the edge of the continental shelf, whichever is greater.

In urging this extension, former Environment Minister Jack Davis, leader of the Canadian delegation, said that Canada was "particularly aware that human destiny is inseparable from that of the ocean".

"With the longest coastline in the world, our country has a direct interest in the wise management of all the world's oceans," he said. "However, as one of the world's principal coastal states we have a particular interest in that 20 percent ribbon of the total sea which extends over the world's continental shelves and margins."

Davis stressed that while Canada wanted to manage its resources and environment in these waters, it was firmly committed to maintaining free movement of shipping.

### Fisheries

The idea of the 200-mile economic zone, "goes a long way toward resolving the problems of the fisheries", stated Mr. Davis. Within this zone, he said, Canada could find solutions in four major areas of concern:

— Management of coastal stocks "on a scientific and functional basis — which means that they must be managed as a whole".

— Protection and management of anadromous stocks such as salmon which journey far from waters in which they are spawned, and which are often taken by nations that do not share the burden of their cultivation and management. Davis said that the primary interests of the state in whose rivers these species are spawned "must be recognized throughout the limits of their migratory range".

— Comprehensive management of wide-ranging stocks such as tuna and whales with an accommodation of in-

terests in the setting of international commissions.

— Canada also believes that other nations should be allowed to harvest surplus stocks not reserved to the coastal state, but that this fishing should be subject to coastal state authority. Canada would also want to see "equitable arrangements" for apportionment of the surplus.

### Pollution

Concerning ocean pollution, Davis said that "the coastal state was both part of the problem and an indispensable force for its solution". He cited the St. Lawrence River as an example of an inland water system, whose management influences the ocean and its resources.

Canada is committed to promotion of free communication by sea under the proper safeguards. "Navigation is a basic, legitimate and vital use of the sea," Mr. Davis said. "We do not wish to impede it any more than we wish to put an end to the economic development of our country. But we must be sure it is subject to proper regulation."

Davis said that Canada hoped the Conference would ensure effective international navigation standards. In addition, the coastal state should be able to take special measures where these world standards were not enough. As examples he cited ice-covered waters, congested traffic situations, narrow and shallow channels, and ecologically sensitive areas.

On the matter of international straits, Mr. Davis said that he was confident that the national interests involved could be reconciled. Canada favours an international system of safeguards to ensure that the coastal and flag states involved exercised their rights "in a reasonable manner". Canada also supports attempts to accommodate the interests of all states involved in the question of passage through archipelagic waters. Canada's Arctic archipelago was a "classic" example of an area requiring special treatment.

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