

Spanish; in addition, the backlog of the Commission's documentation is to be printed, initially in English.

Continental Shelf and Fisheries

At its eighth session in 1953, the General Assembly had before it the International Law Commission's draft articles on the continental shelf and draft articles on fisheries¹. It decided not to deal with any aspect of the régime of the high seas or the régime of territorial waters until all related problems had been studied by the International Law Commission and reports on them submitted².

At the ninth session of the General Assembly in 1954, the United States supported by a number of other member states, proposed that the General Assembly should take up the draft articles on the continental shelf at its tenth session. Canada was prepared to support such a proposal. It was argued in support of this proposal that there already exists basic disagreement concerning the continental shelf doctrine, and also that many states are developing their own separate practice regarding it. Other members, in particular Iceland, Ecuador, Peru and Chile, argued that adoption of articles on the continental shelf would prejudice other aspects of the régime of the high seas and the régime of the territorial sea. A compromise resolution was adopted by the General Assembly by a vote of 32 in favour (including Canada), 0 against, with 9 abstentions. This compromise requested the International Law Commission to complete its study of the high seas, territorial waters and related subjects in time for its report to be considered at the eleventh session of the General Assembly in 1956.

The United States also suggested that the question of the regulation of fisheries presents a number of special problems of an economic and technical character which are probably capable of solution only with the assistance of fisheries experts whose views should be secured before the General Assembly discusses the International Law Commission's draft articles on fisheries. The United States proposed therefore that an international technical conference be called to study and make recommendations on the problem of the international conservation and regulation of fisheries. It was the Canadian view that in considering any progressive development of international law relating to high seas fisheries (which is what the Commission is in fact doing in its study of fisheries), no better approach could be found than through the expert knowledge of those closely associated with fisheries. The best way of collating this information was through an international conference. The main argument in the Legal Committee on this proposal concerned the terms of reference of the conference. A number of states were anxious to ensure that the conference restrict itself to technical and scientific questions; they argued that it should not become involved in the question of regulation of high seas fisheries or related questions, since that would prejudice the decisions of the International Law Commission. A resolution was adopted by the General Assembly by a vote of 38 in favour (including Canada), 5 against (the Soviet bloc), with 4 abstentions, which requested the Secretary-General to convene an international technical conference to study the problem of the international conservation of the living resources of the sea. The report of the conference is to be submitted to the International Law Commission which will take it into account when it studies the question of fisheries.

This conference studying conservation of the living resources of the sea was held at the headquarters of FAO in Rome from April 18 to May 10, 1955.

¹General Assembly document A/2456.

²See *Canada and the United Nations 1953-54*, pp. 93-95.