

12. The Rt. Hon. Lord Callaghan of Cardiff KG, ACOPS' President and a former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, applauded the United Nations' decision to declare 1998 to be *International Year of the Oceans* and stressed the important role that NGOs such as ACOPS had to play in bringing home the message of protection of the oceans and their resources. He also thanked Congressman Curt Weldon, ACOPS' Vice-President from the USA, for his role in the promotion of the concept of ocean security, both nationally and globally.
13. Dr. Mario Soares, Chairman of the IWCO, expressed the view that it was essential for mankind to form a new relationship with the environment, especially with regard to future generations, as it progresses towards the third millennium. He hoped that by being visionary in objectives and pragmatic in approach, both the beauty of the oceans and their resources could be more fully available for the benefit of mankind.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE

Saturday, 31 January 1998

Opening of the Conference

14. The Plenary Session was chaired by Prof. Per Wramner. Ms. Paula Caballero, Director of Internexos, Colombia, and Member of ACOPS' Advisory Board on Oceans and Coastal Areas Management and Policy, was rapporteur for the session. The Conference Agenda is attached as Appendix I.
15. At the opening ceremony, Prof. Wramner noted that, having begun the process initiated at the Washington Conference in the US Congress, it was quite fitting to continue ACOPS' work in the Swedish Parliament. Stating that many ministers and high-level participants were attending the meeting, he urged that the collective political weight be used to enhance the cause of oceans worldwide through the concept of ocean security. Participants then heard the following statements (Annex III contains keynote speeches and statements presented at the Conference):
16. Ms. Birgitta Dahl, Speaker of the Swedish Parliament, and member of the United Nations High Level Advisory Board on Sustainable Development, opened the Conference by stressing the need to find a common ground for working towards sustainable development, and for developing workable goals and commitments, and concrete actions. She stated that the concept of ocean security was very constructive and should aid in the identification of strategic key areas, one of which was water. She recalled that not only was 1998 the *International Year of the Oceans*, but that the 1999 session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) would concentrate on water issues. Although recent meetings such as the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and the Kyoto Conference were characterised by a gloomy sense of resignation and disappointing results, Ms. Dahl urged participants not to despair given that there was evidence of progress towards sustainable development. Key actors such as ACOPS and GLOBE needed to concentrate on fields of strategic importance and could form the basis for further action. She then highlighted four points of the report of the High Level Advisory Board: