

But perhaps the most dramatic example of the rapid development of an international conscience and sense of international responsibility concerns the protection of the environment. Even ten years ago, threats to the balance of nature were a matter for specialists. The public generally, and governments generally, were hardly aware that problems existed. In a matter of a few years, we have awakened to the risk that we may be doing irreversible harm to the natural order which sustains life upon the planet.

The Stockholm Conference was the world community's first response to this challenge. It will undoubtedly take its place as one of the major conferences in United Nations history. Through the Declaration of the Conference, it has established a kind of "environmental charter", providing a sound basis for the development of international environmental law and other co-operative measures for the protection and enhancement of the human environment. The recommendations for action agreed to by the Conference demonstrate the willingness of governments to work towards this goal. The endorsement of these recommendations consistent with the spirit and sense of purpose displayed by the Declaration will, in the Canadian view, be one of the major achievements of this Assembly.

The Stockholm Conference declared fundamental principles of international environmental law. The international community now has an opportunity to make a further advance in strengthening the international legal regime as it affects the environment. This is in relation to the Law of the Sea.

Canada, like many other countries, is in favour of convening the third Law of the Sea Conference in 1973, but only if preparations are adequate. This will be possible if the Seabed Committee is able to hold two further sessions during 1973. Then, the Conference could be formally launched with an organizational meeting in the fall of 1973 while substantive sessions would be held in 1974 and possibly 1975.

Mr. President, those who wrote the Charter had certain clear ideas about what was needed to preserve international peace and security. They inherited some social, economic and legal machinery and devised more. But the most fore-sighted of them could not have anticipated many of the problems that have preoccupied the United Nations since. The whole range of exercises in peace-keeping; the transition to the post-colonial world; the machinery for economic co-operation between the developed and developing countries; the extended protection of human rights; the work accomplished in relation to the environment, the seabed and outer space: all have called forth activity unimaginable in 1945.

In a remarkable way, the Organization has risen to these demands. It has done so by creating a large and complex family of agencies -- so large and complex, indeed, that strong administrative leadership is as crucial to the continued authority of the United Nations as political leadership itself. To ensure that the machinery functions at maximum effectiveness on a sound and equitable financial basis is a problem of the first order. The Canadian Delegation will work to ensure that this problem receives the steady attention it deserves.

Considerations of cost and complexity are, however, a reminder that a price has to be paid if the United Nations is to be flexible and dynamic. I contend that it has displayed these qualities. The successive challenges of the last generation have been met with only two changes in the Charter, to increase the membership of the Security Council and the Economic and Social