

Canada strongly supported the humanitarian efforts of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees to obtain an adequate international response to the plight of refugees throughout the world. On the political level, Canada focused attention on the relationship between refugee outflows and human rights violations in the countries concerned. Canada continued to make representations to the U.S.S.R. and the countries of Eastern Europe regarding relatives of Canadian citizens who wished to be reunited with their families in Canada. Progress in this area during 1978 was steady. Family reunification was also a feature of our relations with China and Vietnam.

Preserving Canada's Oceans Interests

Canada has a record of achievement in restructuring traditional principles of the Law of the Sea and in developing new ideas on ocean resource management. The Law of the Sea Conference has provided multilateral endorsement of Canada's 200-mile fishing zone and the 12-mile territorial sea and contributed to increasing international acceptance of the need for enhanced coastal state jurisdiction over pollution from ships. Canada devoted much effort during 1978 to resolving difficult outstanding Conference issues, particularly concerning the international system for deep seabed mining, a matter of obvious significance for Canada -- the world's largest producer of nickel.

High-level fisheries negotiations in 1978 led to the signing of a bilateral fisheries agreement with Japan, a Convention on Future Multilateral Co-operation in the North-West Atlantic Fisheries and a Protocol modifying the International Convention for the High Seas Fisheries of the North Pacific Ocean. Ad referendum agreement was reached with the European Economic Community on the text of a bilateral fisheries agreement, and new interim arrangements for 1979 relating to fishing in the area of St. Pierre and Miquelon were agreed with France. Progress was also made in Canada-U.S. negotiations on maritime boundaries and fisheries on both coasts.

Canada-U.S.A. Co-operation

The management of relations with the United States remained Canada's highest bilateral priority. Notwithstanding the variety and complexity of the bilateral agenda, relations with the United States have seldom been better. Achievements in 1978 were impressive: the new Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement and discussions on transboundary air pollution; co-operation on the Northern Gas Pipeline; major bilateral studies on a strategic petroleum reserve and bulk-electricity exchanges; progress towards agreement on the management of east-coast fisheries; record levels of bilateral trade. Close consultation on international matters continued on such subjects as Namibia, the Middle East and Cyprus, human rights and refugees, nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.