



# Statements and Speeches

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## LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE -- II

A Statement to the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, Ottawa, May 22, 1975.

The Canadian Government and I, and I think the other ministers who were present, are generally pleased with the progress made in attaining most of the objectives that the Canadian Government had set down at the Geneva session of the Law of the Sea Conference. As you know, towards the end of the conference, the chairmen of the three committees were designated to produce a negotiating or unified text, which text was tabled on the last day of the session. Each of these chairmen worked on his own, obviously drawing upon the discussions that had taken place, and on the last day the work of these three chairmen appeared in the form of a unified text that is now to be the negotiating text at the resumed session of the Law of the Sea Conference. So that now the conference has advanced to the point where there is a text ... to which the delegates will address themselves and upon which they will work. This is now called the unified text, or the negotiating text, and it is upon this text that I am giving some impression.

The text demonstrates the fact that there has now been sufficient development of new principles of international law to permit some radical departures from the pre-existing traditional principles of the law of the sea. On fisheries the progress has been dramatic. Most countries have agreed on the new conception of the economic zone, which is neither territorial sea nor high seas, as the key to an accommodation between the interests of the coastal states, on the one hand, and the distant-water fishing states, on the other.

Canada's position has always been that the economic zone must be exclusive in that a coastal state must have complete management rights over fisheries in the zone, coupled with the right to reserve to itself as much of the allowable catch as it has the capacity to take. At the same time, the economic zone must be a shared-resource zone in the sense that the coastal state should allow other states to harvest stocks surplus to its needs under coastal-state control and regulation. There appears to be a basis of agreement emerging on just these principles.

Of particular importance to Canada is the inclusion of a provision in the negotiating text on anadromous (salmon) species whereby fishing

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