

prehensive report on the somatic and hereditary effects of radiation, which is to be submitted at the seventeenth session. This agenda item, however, took on a new note of urgency with the resumption of Soviet testing. At the insistence of the Canadian Delegation the Special Political Committee gave first priority to it in the order of its business.

At the first meeting of the Committee on October 16, Canada and several co-sponsoring countries, eventually numbering 24, and representing all major groups of nations except the Soviet Bloc, submitted a comprehensive draft resolution. A competing draft resolution, tabled by Czechoslovakia, sought to deal with the annual progress report of UNSCEAR in a purely routine fashion and thus avoid according importance to the new situation arising from Soviet nuclear tests. During the debate in the Special Political Committee, however, it soon became evident that the Canadian proposals would receive the support of most member states, particularly after a number of minor amendments had been accepted by the co-sponsors and incorporated in the original text.

The Canadian draft resolution incorporated three broad objectives. First, it recommended to the General Assembly the adoption of a declaration to the effect that "both concern for the future of mankind and the fundamental principles of international law impose a responsibility on all states concerning actions which might have harmful biological consequences for the existing and future generations of peoples of other states, by increasing the levels of radio-active fall-out". Secondly, the resolution proposed steps designed to reinforce and, as far as possible, to accelerate the work of UNSCEAR with special reference to the problem of radio-active fall-out. Finally, in a separate and distinct section, the resolution contained a concrete proposal for regular and frequent recording on a world-wide basis of the incidence and concentrations of radio-activity in the atmosphere.

As a result, the World Meteorological Organization is considering how to incorporate in its present world-wide weather reporting system a scheme for the measurement of atmospheric radio-activity and the wide and rapid dissemination of the data obtained. This scheme was conceived specifically to broaden general knowledge about the pattern and intensity of the radio-active element in the earth's environment.

On October 20, 1961, the Canadian and other co-sponsors, succeeded in obtaining priority for the resolution over the Czechoslovakian draft in the voting in Committee. The Canadian proposals were then adopted by 75 votes in favour, none against, with 17 abstentions including notably the Soviet Bloc. On October 27, the General Assembly by a similar overwhelming vote in plenary formally adopted the Canadian resolution, which has since been published as United Nations Document A/Res/1629 (XVI), dated October 30, 1961. The Czechoslovakian resolution, which had not been rejected by the Special Political Committee, did not muster the two-thirds majority support in plenary necessary for its final adoption.