

There are, of course, many other important issues referred to in the more than 300 draft articles in the negotiating text. In summary, however, I can say without hesitation that this round of work, or negotiations, in the conference has made great progress. We had hoped that it would be possible to make even further progress. While a unified text has been produced, which can provide an extremely useful basis for future negotiations, it has no legal status yet and will not of itself constitute the proposed convention. Considerable negotiation is still required. In these circumstances, as I have said several times in the House, the Canadian Government, like many others represented at the conference, will be making a very careful appraisal of the results of the conference with a view to determining what further action should be taken to promote the future development of the international Law of the Sea.

The Canadian Government will be in the forefront of those attempting to develop equitable and rational solutions to the wide range of problems which we hope will be finally solved by the conference at its next session, which we hope will be held early next year.

I think that if we were not so vitally concerned about the fisheries as we are, that we would generally feel that great progress had been made, and probably, if we were able to establish internationally the regime for the fisheries envisaged in the negotiating text, we would have no real worries. Because of the possible time-lag in the ultimate signing of a treaty or a convention which would cover the fisheries, we obviously are considering and appraising what steps we might take prior to that possibility, or that eventuality.