

Within less than a decade three major changes have taken place which need to be taken into account in assessing UNCTAD.

The first, on the surface, appears to be mainly an organizational change but its underlying importance is much greater. I mentioned that UNCTAD has found its unique role, and we are all aware of the internal strength which it has taken on. But UNCTAD, like other United Nations bodies, is now gearing its activities to the global approach represented by the Second U.N. Development Decade. And within the U.N. system the need to draw together the activities of all organs concerned with the programme of the Second Development Decade has been widely recognized. The Economic and Social Council has been expanded to make it more representative and better equipped to deal with the responsibilities assigned to it by the charter. We welcome this general, and widely supported, move towards improved coordination and cooperation within the U.N. family.

Second, there has been a marked change not only in the organizational approach to development problems, but also in the refinement and understanding of these problems themselves. The agenda for this Conference offers ample evidence of this change: attempts are being made in a number of areas to find individual solutions to particular problems rather than to seek simple and all-inclusive answers. We are, for example, to examine the problems of the least developed and the landlocked developing countries with a view to identifying measures which may offer solutions to their particular difficulties. My delegation believe that one of the answers to the problems of the Least Developed is an increased flow of resources on the softest terms possible. Canada is, indeed, investigating the possibility of earmarking a portion of its multilateral assistance to these countries. It is particular ideas along these lines that the Canadian Delegation would hope to pursue in our subsequent deliberations.

Other agenda items - for example, that relating to environmental questions, which will be examined at the Stockholm Conference this year in greater detail - also reflect this greater awareness and more refined understanding of the problems which we face. It is now a fact that the international community has shown its readiness to go beyond traditional economic considerations in search of appropriate action which would improve living standards and enhance the quality of life in both developed and developing countries.

As we come to realize the diverse nature of development problems, we also come to realize that appropriate responses by developed countries will differ and that common solutions for all developing countries will have less application than before. Concepts of equitable burden-sharing among developed countries on the one hand, and maximal advantage for the developing countries on the other, need equally to be refined.