

UN plan still provides the best opportunity to achieve a negotiated settlement and we believe the plan to be in the interest of all parties, including South Africa. Ultimately, the question is one of political will. Canada maintains an active participation in this issue through its membership in the so-called Contact Group along with France, West Germany, the U.K. and the U.S.

Human issues
a) Refugees

The wars and upheaval in Afghanistan and Indochina have added dramatically to the global refugee problem. Since 1975, approximately 1.75 million refugees have fled Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. While in recent months the boat exodus from Vietnam has declined markedly, the possibility of a significant renewed flow cannot be ruled out. Overland refugees from Cambodia and Laos number 130,000 in UN camps in Thailand and tens of thousands more are clustered in temporary camps along the Thai-Cambodian border. Some 700,000 Afghan refugees, fleeing the war, have crossed into Pakistan and there are fears this number could eventually exceed one million. The African refugee population is estimated at four million, and the problem is especially serious in the Horn of Africa.

Canada has contributed \$15 million to Cambodian refugee relief through various governmental and non-governmental organizations. We have undertaken a program to resettle 60,000 Indochinese refugees in 1979 and 1980 at a cost of \$125 million. Canada is also contributing \$2,400,000 for Afghan refugee programs, \$2 million to the All-Africa International Red Cross program, and \$600,000 to the appeal by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the repatriation of refugees from former Rhodesia.

b) Hostage-taking

The United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted a convention on hostage-taking on December 17, 1979. This has now been ratified by 17 countries including Canada. It will enter into force after the twenty-second ratification. Implementing legislation is being prepared for submission to the current session of Parliament. Among other things the convention requires state parties to extradite or prosecute alleged hostage-takers found within their jurisdiction and to take steps to secure the release of hostages on their territory. It is not as strong a convention as Canada would like, but it is a worthwhile measure against a growing international menace.

Law of the sea

The ninth session of the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea convened in New York from March 3 to April 4, 1980 with an agreed objective of finalizing texts and formulating a draft convention. The New York meeting was successful in producing a second revision of the Conference negotiating text which will be the basis for further negotiations when the session resumes in August in Geneva. It is not certain, however, that the negotiating text can be finalized in five weeks in Geneva, and a further session may well be required before the new Law of the Sea convention can be adopted in Caracas.

Nevertheless, the chances for success for the conference remain good and the few outstanding issues are generally moving towards resolution. One major issue, the question of the limits of the continental margin, has now found a generally satisfactory solution. Unfortunately, new concerns have arisen with regard to the coastal state's sovereign rights over marine scientific research on the margin beyond 200 miles. The