



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 58/10 NEW STATEMENT ON TERRITORIAL SEA AND CONTIGUOUS ZONE

(Text of a statement prepared for delivery by The Hon. George A. Drew, P.C., Q.C., Chairman of the Canadian Delegation to the International Conference of the Law of the Sea, in committee March 31, 1958 at Geneva, Switzerland. (See also S & S 58/9))

Mr. Chairman, we now come to the discussion of the articles which undoubtedly present the greatest difficulty. What has taken place already, or rather what has not taken place, serves to demonstrate that in seeking agreement upon a codification of the Law of the Sea, we have indeed undertaken an extremely formidable task. It may well be, however, that what we have learned during these extended discussions may assist us greatly in finding common ground for a solution of the difficult questions with which we are now confronted.

In putting forward the Canadian proposal, we do so with no claim that we have discovered any magic formula, but only in the hope that it may offer the possibility of agreement between the widely differing points of view which have already been expressed. May I explain why we attach so much importance to success at this conference, and particularly to agreement in regard to the articles now under consideration. During the thousands of private discussions which have taken place, many illuminating opinions have been expressed. I recall one comment which suggested to me how necessary it is that we recognize very clearly what the alternative to agreement would be. This was the remark to which I refer: "Why would it be such a disaster if we failed to reach agreement at this time? After all, nothing very disastrous followed the failure of the 1930 conference at The Hague". I doubt if this statement represents any substantial measure of opinion at this conference. I am confident it does not. It did suggest, however, that we should keep very clearly in our minds how great the difference is between the two conferences. In the first place, there is the difference in the size of the two conferences. At The Hague in 1930, there were 42 delegations. There are 87 delegations now meeting here in Geneva. Many of the new delegations are those from countries which have come to nationhood since 1930. Some of them are sharing for the first time the processes by which the representatives of nations, embracing the