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Statement by Miss Helen Marsh,  
Canadian Delegate - Third Committee, United Nations,

October 19, 1962.

Mr. Chairman, And I can assure you that the fifteenth anniversary will be suitably observed.

Chapters VIII and IX of the report of the Economic and Social Council, which have been assigned to this Committee, contain substantial food for thought. Some sections of this report will be examined later by this Committee under separate items of our agenda. Since detailed comments on the remaining sections would require considerable time, I propose at this time to offer the views of my Delegation only on those aspects of the United Nations work in the social field which are of particular interest to my Government.

Along with the Delegations of Afghanistan, Denmark, Morocco, Thailand and Yugoslavia, we have tabled the draft resolution contained in Document A/C3/L995. I should like to explain briefly why my Delegation believes this resolution to be important.

The 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs represents many years of careful and patient work by experts in the field of international narcotic control and it reflects their experience in this complicated area. Some 73 countries took part in the conference which drafted this Convention and 64 of those countries have signed it. It must therefore be considered as representing a large measure of common agreement.

Canada was not only an active participant at the conference which produced this Convention, but was also the first country to ratify it. To come into force the Convention requires ratification by 40 countries. The purpose of the resolution which has been tabled is to bring to the attention of the countries which have not yet ratified the Convention the desirability of doing so in the near future.

Some countries have expressed fears that upon coming into force, the Convention would destroy the international control system which has been laboriously developed over the last 50 years. The Canadian Government does not share these fears. On the contrary, we believe that to be effective international control must reflect the agreement of the largest possible number of countries.

We also believe that the Single Convention represents this kind of agreement -- and that its coming into force will represent a further advance in international control by covering narcotic substances and other matters not wholly dealt with under the existing nine multilateral treaties. The Convention will replace these treaties and thus will provide not only for codification but will also further the cause of international controls as regards narcotic drugs.

Another draft resolution which my Delegation has co-sponsored is contained in Document A/C3/L991, Revision 1. Its purpose is to ensure that the fifteenth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights will receive the attention it deserves. My country attaches great importance to the Declaration and believes that December 10, 1948, will remain a milestone in the history of the United Nations and of mankind.