

middle powers, like Canada, could not leave questions of conservation of the planet to the rule of the strongest.

- Canada does have domestic imperatives in UNCED. We could and should use the conference, for example, to drive home the point about our concerns over the long term survival of fishing stocks on the high seas. We could use UNCED, but have not so far, to pursue our interests as well in terms of securing our freshwater supplies against demands from our neighbours. However, what we lack, so far, is a vision for Canada of the kind of environment we want in the long run, and how UNCED will help us attain it.
- In the preparations for Stockholm, the Canadian delegation repeatedly received very clear political direction from Ministers, and from Cabinet to guide their negotiations. For Canada's delegation to UNCED, such political direction has been a long time in coming, and where Canadian Ministers stand politically on many of the issues is not yet known.

(ii) The International Context for Stockholm and Rio²

- In 1972 there was limited international scientific cooperation on environmental problems and little data on global environmental conditions and trends. Today there is much more of both and there are developed professional constituencies around most of the issues on the UNCED agenda.
- In 1972 there was little knowledge of the economic costs of either taking or postponing action on environmental degradation and pollution. Today those costs are largely known, are considered far greater than anyone anticipated twenty years earlier and, in some countries, are now a major political concern and obstacle to progress.
- The Stockholm Conference was held at the end of a long period of international prosperity. Today, UNCED is occurring in the second year of a prolonged global recession, and it comes after a decade long debt crisis for many developing countries. Today, in the face of growing unemployment and recessions in their national and the global economies, the rich countries have never felt so poor. With declining budgets, public support for increased international programs and especially for development aid has fallen dramatically.

² See Bruce, pp. 5-8 and 15-16 plus Munro, pp. 2-5.