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THE CANADIAN DELEGATION AT THE RESUMED SEVENTH SESSION OF THE LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE IN NEW YORK FROM AUGUST 21 TO SEPTEMBER 15, 1978

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Don Jamieson, has announced that, with the assistance of the Honourable Otto Lang, Minister of Justice and Minister of Transport, and the Honourable Roméo LeBlanc, Minister of Fisheries and Environment, he will lead the Canadian Delegation to the resumed seventh session of the Third U.N. Law of the Sea Conference in New York from August 21 to September 15, 1978. J. Alan Beesley, Canadian High Commissioner to Australia, will be deputy head of the Delegation.

This short session will follow up on the work begun in Geneva last spring and will be a crucial stage in the drafting of a new convention of the oceans. The last session saw significant progress, chiefly on the question of seabed mining. With respect to fisheries, an improved text on the conservation and catching of anadromous species was accepted in Geneva and the Conference seemed closer than ever to a compromise on the question of the access of landlocked and geographically disadvantaged States to surplus living resources in the economic zones of the coastal States, their regions and subregions. The participants acknowledge, however, that the latter question is closely linked to that of the definition of the seaward edge of the continental margin. Discussions, in which progress was made in Geneva on other questions, such as protection of the marine environment, delimitation of maritime boundaries and settlement of disputes, will also be continued in New York.

This substantial progress, in addition to the results achieved in previous sessions (12-mile territorial waters, 200-mile fishing zone, special pollution control measures in the Arctic), will still have to be set down in a

real and universally accepted convention. But the Conference will be unable to adopt a convention until it has resolved the most difficult questions, in particular the question of the system of seabed mining.

In the light of this recent progress, and without minimizing the size of the problems to be resolved, Canada has a keen desire to see this convention drawn up, and its Delegation will work actively toward this during the session.