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## THE CANADIAN DELEGATION AT THE NINTH SESSION OF THE LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mark MacGuigan, has announced that he will head the Canadian Delegation to the first part of the ninth session of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea which is presently taking place in New York from March 3 to April 4, 1980. Canada's High Commissioner to Australia, J. Alan Beesley, is Deputy Head of the Delegation.

The Conference has decided that its ninth session, to be split into two five-week parts, will be the decision-making session. This first part will endeavour to finalize the negotiations on all remaining issues and to produce a final Conference document that would serve as a draft convention which could be adopted this summer in Geneva, and be signed later in Caracas. The focus will once again be primarily on unresolved issues relating to the establishment of an international system for the exploitation of deep seabed resources, including controls on the level of seabed nickel production, voting procedures for the planned Council of the International Seabed Authority and contract terms between the Authority and seabed mining entities. Discussions will also continue on delimitation of maritime boundaries between adjacent or opposite states, marine scientific research and the system of financial contributions for the exploitation of mineral resources of the continental margin beyond 200 miles.

The Conference has to its credit an impressive record of achievement in restructuring traditional principles of Law of the Sea and in developing new concepts of ocean resource management. The Conference has already influenced state practice. For Canada, the Conference has provided multilateral endorsement of the 200-mile fishing zone and the 12-mile territorial sea, reconfirmed its sovereign rights over the resources of the continental margin beyond 200 miles and contributed to international acceptance of

enhanced coastal state jurisdiction over pollution from ships, particularly in ice-covered Arctic waters. The resurgence of the fishing industry in our coastal provinces offers dramatic evidence of the positive impact which the Conference has had upon Canada.

Facing on three oceans, with a vast continental shelf, a major fisheries industry, an important land-based mineral industry and an ecologically vulnerable Arctic, Canada has a vital interest in the outcome of the Law of the Sea Conference. In view of the substantial progress made to date, but without minimizing the problems which remain to be solved, Canada's objective is to achieve the long awaited global convention on the Law of the Sea.