

DO ANTARTICO  
CONSULTIVA ESPECIAL

TE SUR L'ANTARCTIQUE  
CONSULTATIVE SPÉCIALE



ANTARCTIC TREATY

XI th SPECIAL CONSULTATIVE MEETING

ДОГОВОР ОБ АНТАРКТИКЕ

XI СПЕЦИАЛЬНОЕ КОНСУЛЬТАТИВНОЕ СОВЕЩАНИЕ

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STATEMENT BY THE HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF  
JAPAN TO THE XI ANTARCTIC CONSULTATIVE  
MEETING

November 20, 1990

Statement by the Representative of Japan

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the Japanese Delegation, I should like to offer you my warmest congratulations on your appointment as Chairman of this Special Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting. I am confident that under your able guidance this session will attain its intended goals.

I desire, also, to express our most sincere thanks to H.E. Ambassador Edmundo Vargas, Acting Foreign Minister of Chile for his very warm words of welcome yesterday.

I should like to express my Delegation's most profound gratitude to the Government of Chile for hosting this Special Consultative Meeting. I am confident that this Meeting here in this beautiful city of Viña del Mar will add new lustre to the history of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting and that it will long remain in the memories of all participants.

Yesterday, Ecuador and the Netherlands were approved and welcomed as new members of the Consultative Meeting.

It is in every way appropriate that these two countries, already actively engaged in research in Antarctica, should be members of this Meeting. I am convinced that the addition of those two countries to our number will contribute greatly not only to the deliberations in this Meeting, but also to the further strengthening and developing of the present Antarctic Treaty system.

My Delegation is happy that Switzerland has acceded to the Antarctic Treaty, as the thirty-ninth Contracting party. We would like to take this opportunity to call most earnestly on those countries which have not yet done so to accede to the Treaty, so that the Antarctic Treaty system shall be further strengthened.

Mr. Chairman,

There has been increasing concern regarding global environmental issues in recent years. Where the protection of the Antarctic environment is concerned, the operation of the Antarctic Treaty system has, for three decades now, demonstrated its effectiveness, with the adoption of three conventions, two of which are already in force, the Agreed Measures and numerous recommendations, all the fruit of most careful and thorough consideration.

At this Special Consultative Meeting, we have the important task of adding to and further strengthening the measures to effectively protect the Antarctic environment. To this end, we must also pool our efforts to ensure the early entry into force of the Convention on the Regulation of Antarctic Mineral Resource Activities, already signed by as many as seventeen signatory states, including my own. We must also explore effective and realistic ways to set up comprehensive measures to tackle the Antarctic environment issue. This subject is directly

related to the Antarctic Treaty itself and the operation of the Antarctic Treaty system. It is essential that those comprehensive measures be elaborated in such a way that the Antarctic Treaty system shall be further strengthened. We also believe that that elaboration should be based on objective assessment of the environmental impact of human activities and the feasibility of measures to prevent any adverse environmental impact.

Mr. Chairman,

We have learned recently that certain countries have introduced, or intend to introduce, into their parliaments legislation which would make it an offence for any person to undertake any mineral activity in the part of Antarctica over which the respective state claims territorial sovereignty.

The Japanese Delegation would like to take this opportunity to reiterate that Japan greatly desires the protection of the Antarctic environment, and to stress that it is from that standpoint that Japan has actively participated in negotiation of the Convention on the Regulation of Antarctic Mineral Resource Activities and intends henceforth to participate most positively in consultations with regard to comprehensive measures to protect the Antarctic environment.

However, I have to express the concern felt by the Japanese Government regarding the fact that the afore-mentioned unilateral action on the part of those countries cannot fail to discourage international collaborative efforts being made at this very moment by all of us to enhance the protection of the Antarctic environment.

The Government of Japan has stated on several occasions its view that Antarctica should not be the subject of territorial partition, that disputes over territorial partition are not in the interests of the international community as a whole, and, that, therefore, no claim to territorial sovereignty in Antarctica should be recognized. The Japanese Government desires to be officially informed in due course of any explanation the governments concerned would make regarding their views on the relationship between their unilateral action and Article 4, paragraph 2 of the Antarctic Treaty, which states that: "No acts or activities taking place while the present Treaty is in force shall constitute a basis for asserting, supporting or denying a claim to territorial sovereignty in Antarctica or create any rights of sovereignty in Antarctica. No new claim, or enlargement of an existing claim, to territorial sovereignty in Antarctica shall be asserted while the present Treaty is in force."

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I would like assure you that my Delegation is ready to make every possible effort to make this Meeting a successful one.

Thank you.