

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

On World Environment Day, the people of the United States join other peoples and governments of the world in reaffirming our concern for the preservation and enhancement of the global environment. This Day, established four years ago at the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm, Sweden, celebrates the principles adopted there.

This year, we take special note of the second principle of that Conference, which urges conservation of the natural resources of the Earth for the benefit of present and future generations. We must seek with other peoples of the world the best means for reaching a balance between the resources of nature and the human population.

The growing world population will put an increasing strain on the resources of our planet. The United States will continue, along with other donors and international organizations, to assist world-wide efforts to carry out the recommendations of the World Population Plan of Action approved at the World Population Conference in Bucharest in 1974.

Other resource problems require urgent attention. For example, tropical forests are being threatened by the pressures of population and industrial demand. We call upon the countries of the world to cooperate in conserving this life-sustaining resource.

The problem of adequate and safe water resources is significant throughout the world. It is fitting that this problem will be the subject of a special United Nations Water Conference to be held in Mar Del Plata, Argentina in 1977. A United Nations Conference on Desertification later that year will seek solutions to the spreading problem of arid lands. Increased demands for fresh water from agriculture, industry and growing populations force the people of the world to seek solutions together to critical water problems.

As we celebrate World Environment Day, the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements is meeting in Vancouver, Canada. Representatives of nearly all the people on Earth are assembled there to consider the quality of the human environment in its broadest perspective -- to deal with those forces which bear on the quality of life for individual human beings. We wish the Conference the greatest success.

On this occasion we also reaffirm our support of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP). We place particular importance on UNEP's Earthwatch program to assess trends in the Earth's environmental quality, and will continue to develop and coordinate effective U.S. participation in Earthwatch.

As we look forward to our third century as a nation, we must keep a global perspective. We must recognize the inescapable interdependence of human beings, and the dependence of all on the fragile planet we share.

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