

# EDITORIAL

*What we predicted in our last Editorial is now fact: Ambassador Razali Ismail has been elected as President of the 51 UN General Assembly – a very good omen for the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly since he knows the subject matter well, having been the first Chairman of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development.*

*The preparations will be proceed through the Government Council of UNEP ( 27 January–7 February) several intersessional meetings, the CSD (7–25 April), up to the Special Session from 9–13 June. As we want to keep our readers not merely generally up-to-date, but also supply them with the information available only to those attending the meetings, we have changed our editorial planning for the coming year: The first issue will be printed later than usual in March, after the UNEP meeting, so that the next issues will follow on in reporting on the CSD and the General Assembly.*

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*At the special invitation of Mrs. Helga Haub, Chairman of the Elizabeth Haub Foundations in Germany, the United States and Canada, and daughter-in-law of the late Elizabeth Haub, a colloquium will be held next April with the former laureates of the Elizabeth Haub Prize for "exceptional accomplishments in the field of environmental law and policy". The Awardwinners from the 25 years of the Prize's existence will discuss the latest developments in their fields of work, and a special issue of the Journal is planned for that occasion.*

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*The judges to the Tribunal of the Law of the Sea have now been elected. We congratulate and greet many old friends among them, some from our Advisory Board. Although the Tribunal will not officially "open" until the 18 October in Hamburg, the judges will commence their preparations concerning the modalities of their decision-making at the beginning of that month. We shall report.*

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*We are very disappointed that the United Nations draft for a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, endorsed by a huge majority of States, can not be ratified, as India has vowed to oppose the treaty, effectively vetoing it, and leading to the fearful reaction from neighbouring Pakistan to do likewise.*

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*Why are so many of the UN specialised agencies going through a crisis? We reported on the now gradually improved situation in FAO, congratulated UNCTAD for many improvements, and now alarm bells are ringing about the lack of priorities and weaknesses within the World Health Organisation (WHO), especially as a change is not in sight. The renowned "Neue Zürcher Zeitung", writing on the 50-year-old Organisation, notes that it can only be as bad as the Member States allow it to be. As long as the special interests of some Member States still have to be surmounted there will be no change, so even the de-selection or resignation of its controversial Director-General would not help. We hope that some Member State will be successful with a positive initiative.*

*- Wolfgang B. Steiny -*

24 September, 1996