

Arrangements were also co-ordinated for travel abroad by the Governor General to the Nordic countries and by the Prime Minister to 14 countries including Saudi Arabia, Algeria, United Kingdom, Tanzania, Australia, Korea and Mexico. The Secretary of State for External Affairs' visits to 17 countries were also co-ordinated by the protocol bureau.

Privileges and immunities

The Department is responsible for the interpretation and application, in Canada and abroad, of the principles contained in international agreements on privileges and immunities affecting diplomatic missions, consular posts and international organizations.

In November 1981, Canada participated at a diplomatic conference convoked in London for the purpose of adopting a Protocol on the privileges and immunities of the International Maritime Satellite Organization (INMARSAT), an organization established for the purpose of improving maritime communications. In order to facilitate the performance of their functions, the protocol confers certain privileges and immunities on the organization, its staff and representatives of member states.

The State Immunity Bill, which provides for immunity of foreign states in Canadian courts, was passed by the Senate on May 27, 1981 and received second reading in the House of Commons on June 23, 1981. It was then referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs. In general terms, this bill provides that foreign states operating in Canada will not be immune from proceedings relating to their commercial activities. The bill is sponsored by the Department of Justice and is strongly supported by the Department of External Affairs.