

One other field of international endeavour which has become of special interest to Canada concerns international action to prevent and deter the kidnapping of diplomats and other related acts of terrorism. These types of unlawful act place responsible governments in extremely difficult situations. In order to develop an international legal framework to deal with this threat to normal diplomatic activity, the Organization of American States and the Council of Europe have, independently, been examining the possibility of drafting international conventions. We are, of course, following these developments very closely and we have been in contact with the OAS and with other governments so that Canadian views and interests will be taken into account.

All these activities I have been reviewing are directed towards fostering international co-operation and better regulating man's peaceful use of the substance and attributes of the world and universe in which we live. However, dissension, disagreement, and disputes are an inevitable part of international affairs as conducted by sovereign states. The years since the last world conflict have indeed witnessed some progress in providing for their pacific resolution. Nevertheless it is a fact -- and current crises in several regions of the globe bear illuminating testimony to it -- that we have not yet created or established effective machinery for enforcing such international law as already exists. It seems to me that the international community is still bound up with outdated notions that impede the settlement of differences by peaceful means. The 1969 Law of Treaties Convention, to which Canada became a party last December, makes a substantial contribution to the uniformity and applicability of international rules relating to treaties. But we have not yet succeeded in developing a similar codification of a compulsory third-party settlement-of-disputes procedure. While I honestly wish I could say to you that this objective will be realized soon, I am afraid that contemporary international relations do not bode particularly well with respect to banishing strife and conflict in favour of law and diplomacy. Yet responsible persons in government, in international organizations and in private professional and academic institutions and associations must continue to press for an end to the use of force as a means of settling disputes. While the millennium is certainly not at hand, it can perhaps be brought a little less distant.

If progress is to be made, nations must give up narrow and anachronistic ideas of sovereignty. This raises a complex and emotionally-charged subject. I, for one, do not regard acceptance of limitations on sovereignty as unthinkable. We have already accepted such limitations in the economic and communications fields; these should point the way to acceptance of limitations of sovereignty in the interests of peace and security. I hope that Canada will find a way to provide leadership toward such a worthwhile goal.

In my view, it would not be proper to discuss international law without mentioning the International Court of Justice. Canadian views on increasing the effectiveness of the World Court are well known. The Canadian delegation at last year's United Nations General Assembly supported a resolution adopted on "Review of the role of the ICJ". By means of this resolution, member states of the United Nations, and states parties to the Statute of the Court, were invited to submit to the Secretary-General suggestions concerning the role of the Court, on the basis of a questionnaire to be prepared by the Secretariat. In the light of these comments, and those which the ICJ itself may wish to put forward, the Secretary-General is to prepare a comprehensive report to be