

CANADIAN TREATY PRACTICE

The Treaty Section of the Department of External Affairs provides legal advice, both to the Department of External Affairs and to other Government departments, on Canadian treaty procedure, on the drafting of treaty texts and on the interpretation of Canadian treaty obligations.

The Section is responsible for ensuring that the form of international agreements to be entered into by Canada conforms with international usage and Canadian practice. It prepares all formal instruments related to Canadian acceptance of treaty obligations, such as the treaty texts themselves, if signed in Canada, and instruments of ratification, accession, acceptance and approval.

Treaty Register

The Treaty Section maintains up-to-date records on the status of all treaties affecting Canada. The Canada Treaty Register contains particulars of the date and place of signature of a treaty and the dates of tabling in, or approval by, Parliament, together with ratifications and accessions, if applicable, and information on entry into force, reservations, related agreements, subsequent amendments and termination.

During the past 12 months (July 1, 1977 - June 20, 1978) action was taken in connection with 17 multilateral and 55 bilateral agreements. Among the bilateral agreements signed or ratified during that period, 8 conventions concerned the Avoidance of Double Taxation; 8 agreements are within the field of Development Cooperation; 6 on Mutual Fisheries Relations; 5 on Air agreements; 5 on Nuclear Cooperation or Nuclear Safeguards, and 3 on Extradition. The remaining agreements cover a large variety of subjects such as Scientific Cooperation, Foreign Investment Insurance, Cultural and Films Cooperation, Social Security, Transfer of Prisoners, Postal Services, etc. Of major importance was the signature on September 20, 1977 of an agreement with the United States of America on Principles Applicable to a Northern Natural Gas Pipeline, based on the previous agreement with the United States of America concerning Transit Pipelines of January 28, 1977. During the same period the 1933 Trade Agreement with France was denounced and the provisional application of the 1978 Interim Reciprocal Fisheries Agreement with the United States was suspended.

The multilateral agreements on which treaty action was taken by Canada cover such various subjects as the IMCO conventions on Prevention of Collision at Sea and Safety of Life at Sea,