
International Law

In the area of international law, the Department, through its Legal Bureau, has two principal and complementary functions. With respect to international law as it now exists the Bureau provides a general advisory service to the Government and the public on international law, including advice on treaties to which Canada is a party or in which there is a Canadian interest.

Of increasing importance in current relations among states are the numerous international meetings held to codify existing law or formulate new law in the areas previously not subject to it. In this respect the Bureau acts as the operational arm of the Government in the development and maintenance of international law. The following subjects were among those that received the attention of officers in the Legal Bureau in 1974.

Law of the sea

In the field of international law, 1974 was highlighted by the holding of the first substantive session of the Third UN Law of the Sea Conference, which took place in Caracas from June 20 to August 29. One hundred and thirty-seven states, represented by over 2,500 delegates and advisers, engaged in lengthy and arduous negotiations with a view to drawing up a comprehensive and viable treaty on the law of the sea. The Canadian delegation, one of the largest, was headed by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. MacEachen, who, together with the Minister for Regional Economic Expansion, C. D. Jamieson, and the Minister of State (Fisheries), Roméo Leblanc, attended the latter part of the session. Officers of the Legal Bureau played

