

conference to search for a formula for the independence and permanent neutrality of that unhappy state. A substantial measure of progress has rewarded the patient efforts of the negotiators and, despite continuing difficulties, there is still hope that an agreement will be signed early in the new year. Success could mean not only peace in Laos - but a promising formula for dealing with other areas which are a source of friction between East and West.

In the Congo, the United Nations force has continued to demonstrate its ability to respond to the varied demands made upon it during the year. Mind you, this was a new experiment in the peace-keeping function of the United Nations and naturally serious difficulties have been encountered - but the general course and direction of the United Nations' role cannot be questioned. Were it not for the United Nations' presence, the Congo would probably sink into tribal strife and might even become the scene of a great-power conflict. Canada continues to participate in the United Nations Congo force and to support the aims of the world organization, confident that there is no real alternative to United Nations assistance if peace is to return to that part of Africa.

Increased UN Stature

The United Nations itself - the only body which truly reflects the state of international relations - has gained in stature during the year. The internal crisis created by the death of Dag Hammarskjold and which for a time threatened its very existence, was overcome in a satisfactory way through the assumption of the office of Secretary-General by U Thant of Burma. The administration of his office in the weeks that have passed since his election gives promise that he will continue the traditions of selfless leadership and wise judgment which have come to be associated with the office of Secretary-General. The fact that the crisis was weathered without sacrifice of Charter principle or derogation from the integrity of the office of the Secretary-General is a source of both satisfaction and potential future strength for the United Nations.

Progress toward Disarmament

In the field of disarmament, considerable progress was made during 1961. From the time when 10-nation disarmament committee negotiations were broken off in June 1960, the Canadian Government has pressed to have the talks restarted. Intensive discussions behind the scenes at the sixteenth General Assembly of the United Nations finally led to agreement on a statement of principles to guide future disarmament negotiations and on a satisfactory negotiating forum. The enlarged and more representative composition of the disarmament committee, to which eight uncommitted nations have been added, should bring new ideas on the problem and should give greater assurance that the talks when resumed will be continued without interruption until a workable scheme for actual measures of disarmament is devised.