

Annex 17 to the Chicago Convention relating to the physical security of airports, and other measures for joint action by States. As co-sponsor of the original resolution upon which the present resolution was based in substance, Canada is gratified that draft resolution L.4 was adopted by consensus, as a manifestation of international will to combat all acts of unlawful interference with civil aviation and to ensure the security of international air travel.

#### 4. Drafting of an International Convention against the Taking of Hostages

Among the important matters debated by the Sixth Committee (Legal) at the thirty-second session was the drafting of an international convention against the taking of hostages. The inclusion of this question was the result of an initiative on the part of the Federal Republic of Germany which culminated, at the thirty-first session of the General Assembly, in the adoption by consensus of a resolution creating a Special Committee responsible for drawing up the proposed convention. The Special Committee began its work in August 1977, without however succeeding in developing a draft convention at its first session. At its thirty-second session, on the recommendation of the Sixth Committee, the General Assembly adopted a resolution by consensus renewing the Committee's mandate; the Committee will meet in Geneva in February 1978.

On December 5, 1977, Mr. Philippe Kirsch, legal adviser to the Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations, made the following statement concerning the convention.

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The Government of Canada fully supports international efforts to put an end to the taking of hostages and to conclude, under the auspices of the United Nations, an international convention against such acts. Acts of hostage-taking flagrantly violate the fundamental rights of the individual, including the right to life, liberty and security as proclaimed in article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Just as states have sought to protect the individual and preserve order through systems of criminal justice, so the international community must take similar steps to prevent and punish acts of hostage-taking through international cooperation.

In considering the essential elements of a convention against the taking of hostages, there is considerable international legal precedent. My delegation has reviewed, both in the Sixth Committee and in the Hostage-Taking Committee, those principles of particular relevance to effective international action. One point stands out. International legal precedents, whether relating to armed conflicts or to acts occurring outside the context of armed conflict provide for a complete prohibition against the taking of hostages, regardless of the motive or identity of the perpetrator or the identity of the victim.