

# *Friendly Relations: A Study of Principles of International Law*

**A**T THE invitation of the Mexican Government, a United Nations Special Committee on Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation Among States met in Mexico City from August 27 to October 2. Canada was one of the 27 countries nominated by the President of the eighteenth session of the General Assembly to serve on this body, which was set up at that session on the recommendation of the Sixth (Legal) Committee for the purpose of studying certain principles of international law.

The desirability of such study had been outlined at the seventeenth session (1962) in Resolution 1815, adopted by the Sixth Committee as a compromise among three projects submitted respectively by Canada, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. The preamble to the resolution stressed the need for "the progressive development of international law" in the light of "the great political, economic, social and scientific changes that have occurred in the world since the adoption of the Charter" which "give increased importance to the role of international law in relations among nations". In the operative part of the resolution, the following seven topics were given priority for study and development in accordance with the Charter, as being basic "principles of international law concerning friendly relations and co-operation among states":

- (a) the prohibition of the threat or use of force;
- (b) peaceful settlement of disputes;
- (c) non-intervention in domestic affairs;
- (d) the duty of states to co-operate with one another;
- (e) equal rights and self-determination;
- (f) the sovereign equality of states;
- (g) the duty to fulfil international obligations.

## **Debate in UN Legal Committee**

The first three topics were debated by the Sixth Committee at the eighteenth session, together with the question of the legal aspects of the sovereign equality of states, which was moved up the list as the basic notion underlying the Charter system (mainly Article 2). The Canadian Government, with a good many others, submitted written comments on these points at the request of the United Nations Secretary-General.\*

By Resolution 1966 (XVIII), the Special Committee was set up to meet before the nineteenth session and draw up a report "containing the conclusions of its study and its recommendations" on the first four topics, after reviewing, in particular:

\*Reproduced in UN Document A/5470 of August 7, 1963.