
CRIMINAL LAW

With the constant rise in international criminal activities, countries must improve and extend present areas of cooperation in fighting crime. To this end, Canada is negotiating a network of mutual legal assistance treaties with other countries. Such treaties have been signed with Italy and the Netherlands in the past year.

Canada is also making a concerted effort to update old extradition treaties and negotiate new ones with priority countries. In 1990, an extradition treaty was signed with Mexico.

Previously negotiated mutual legal assistance treaties with the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, the Bahamas, Mexico, France and Hong Kong entered into force, as did extradition treaties with Mexico, the Philippines and Spain.

The ongoing battle against the drug trade required specific legal action in the past year. Memoranda

of understanding on combatting drugs were signed with Mexico and the U.S.S.R. to create the framework for extensive cooperation on drug-related issues. The 1988 Vienna Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances entered into force for Canada last year.

Canada also took part in the Economic Summit countries' drug-related initiatives on money laundering and precursor chemicals and this will be reflected in Canada's response to the narcotics problem.

Customs cooperation was also enhanced multilaterally through accession to the Nairobi Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance for the Prevention, Investigation and Repression of Customs Offences, as well as through the signing of a bilateral customs agreement with Mexico.

DIPLOMATIC LAW

International law requires that diplomatic and consular personnel receive immunities in the countries to which they are posted so that they are not unduly influenced by the local authorities while in those countries.

The Legal Affairs Bureau ensures that Canada's diplomatic and consular representatives abroad receive the treatment due to them there.

As privileges and immunities are reciprocal, the Bureau also ensures that the treatment of foreign diplomats in Canada corresponds to the treatment Canadian diplomats receive in foreign postings. By

advising External Affairs and International Trade Canada and other departments of the limits of the immunities of foreign diplomats and consular representatives in Canada, the Bureau guards against the abuse of these exemptions.

International organizations have a special status in international law, and the Legal Bureau is responsible for negotiating headquarters agreements for those based in Canada. In 1990, a new headquarters agreement was signed with the International Civil Aviation Organization.

TREATY LAW

The Treaty Section of the Legal Affairs Bureau responds to inquiries from the public on Canadian treaties. The section maintains an up-to-date list of treaties in force for Canada and publishes the *Canadian Treaty Series*.

A new treaty publication system provides users with a copy of the original signed text, while speeding up publication. Increased computerization enables the section to respond more promptly to requests for information.