

No. 61/12 ENLARGEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL LAW COMMISSION

Statement of Mr. Cadieux, Canadian Representative
on the 6th Committee of the United Nations General
Assembly, on October 6, 1961.

Introductory Remarks

As this is the first occasion on which I have had the privilege to address the 6th Committee at the outset, I would like, on behalf of my delegation and myself, to offer sincere congratulations to you, Mr. Chairman, on your election as Chairman of this Committee. Similarly, I would like to offer sincere congratulations to Professor Mustafa Kamil Yasseen on his election as Vice-Chairman, and to Dr. Endre Ustor on his election as Rapporteur. Already the discussion which has taken place suggests, Mr. Chairman, that plenty of challenges lie ahead which will test the skill of the newly-elected officers of this Committee, but my delegation has full confidence that these challenges will be fully met and successfully overcome.

On behalf of the Canadian delegation, we would also like to extend a warm welcome to Sierra Leone, the United Nations' newest member, Canada looking on the admission of Sierra Leone to the United Nations with particular pride and pleasure, having regard to the close Commonwealth ties existing between the two countries.

History of the "Gentlemen's Agreement"

We have listened with great interest to the learned discussion that has taken place throughout the past two meetings on the enlargement of the International Law Commission item. While a variety of views have been expressed, there seems to be general agreement on one matter, namely that further expansion of the Commission is required to take into account that the membership of the United Nations has been increased by 21 states, with 19 of these states being African states, since 1956.

By Resolution 1103 (XI), dated 18 December 1956, the General Assembly increased the membership from 15, being the number at which the Commission was originally established in 1947, to 21 members, to ensure that the great number of states which had joined the United Nations since that time would be adequately represented on the Commission without prejudice to the status quo existing at that time.

During the discussion that took place in the 6th Committee prior to the adoption of General Assembly Resolution 1103 referred to above, delegations reached what is known as the "Gentlemen's Agreement" with regard to the allocation