

The Section is equally concerned with the status and problems of Canadian diplomatic and consular personnel abroad. It advises Canadian missions wishing either to invoke or to waive immunity from jurisdiction on their own behalf or for members of their staff involved in legal processes. Although Canadian right to immunity will often be confirmed by the Section, foreign missions and their personnel do have a duty under the Vienna conventions on diplomatic and consular relations to respect local laws. Thus the Section will also often instruct missions to waive immunity so that Canada and Canadians will not unnecessarily evade the normal course of local justice.

Apart from diplomatic and consular immunity the Section is further concerned with sovereign immunity, which may be invoked when Canada or Canadian Government agencies are involved in legal proceedings in foreign courts. For example Canada has invoked its sovereign immunity in certain legal proceedings which are under way in a Piraeus court (in Greece) against a number of defendants and which have attempted to implead Canada. These proceedings are related to a shipment by CIDA of Canadian wheat which was destined for East Pakistan, but which could not be unloaded because of the outbreak of the civil war there.