

agreements governed by international law to which Canada is a signatory or party are indexed in the Canada Treaty Register with all pertinent details. Non-binding arrangements entered into by Canada, such as memoranda of understanding, are indexed in a separate Register of Understandings and Arrangements.

Privileges and Immunities

Canada's international obligations pertaining to privileges and immunities are set forth in the Vienna Conventions on Diplomatic and Consular Relations and in several conventions concluded within international organizations. The Department is responsible for interpreting and applying, both in Canada and abroad, our international obligations in Canada in relation to diplomatic missions, consular posts and international organizations.

During the year, the Department continued its efforts to see that the privileges and immunities were used not to the advantage of individuals, but to ensure that diplomatic

missions, consular posts and international organizations were allowed to operate efficiently as representatives of foreign States and of the said organizations. Similarly, these conventions grant reciprocal privileges and immunities to the diplomatic missions and consular posts of Canada, and to its missions to international organizations. The Department expended considerable effort to ensure that foreign States fulfilled their international obligations toward Canada.

The *State Immunity Act*, which came into force on July 15, 1982 sanctioned in Canadian law the principle by which States can be brought before the courts of Canada for their commercial activities. This Act coincides with the general international practice favoring the principle of the restrictive immunity of states. The Department is monitoring certain actions brought under the Act closely, in order that the concept of commercial activities might be defined by the courts, taking into account Canada's international obligations toward the diplomatic missions and consular posts of foreign States on Canadian soil.