

EXTERNAL RELATIONS, TRADE AND DEFENCE

21.1 Canada's external operations

In the 1980s, considerable changes have occurred in the conduction of Canada's external relations. In April 1981, the responsibility for immigration programs abroad was transferred to the Department of External Affairs, together with the foreign service staff of the Canadian Employment and Immigration Commission. These programs include the recruitment of immigrants, the admission of refugees and the entry into Canada of tourists, students and temporary workers. Similarly, the field staff of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) was brought into the department.

In January 1982, the federal government effected a major reorganization of its economic and external affairs departments, moving the international trade policy and trade promotion functions of the former Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce to External Affairs.

As a result of these changes, the mandate and responsibilities of External Affairs have been expanded to incorporate the full spectrum of Canada's international relations, including foreign policy, trade, immigration and aid. In addition, the department provides administrative support to the foreign operations of other departments, and represents the international interests of other departments which are without operations abroad.

In the past several years, the department has undergone several organizational adjustments aimed at integrating more closely the political, economic and trade functions of the department, and streamlining the delivery of programs abroad.

In January 1986, various units of the department performing intelligence functions were reorganized into a new foreign intelligence bureau. The bureau is responsible for providing the department and the government with political and economic intelligence relating to the capabilities, intentions or activities of foreign states and persons.

21.2 Canada's international status

The growth of Canada's international status is reflected in the development of the Department of External Affairs since its establishment in 1909. Until the 20th century Canadian negotiations with foreign countries were conducted through the British foreign office and dealings with other parts of the Empire through a colonial office. The gradual recognition of Canadian autonomy in international affairs and increased Canadian responsibilities abroad made expansion of services and representation after World War I inevitable and necessary. An important step in the evolution of Canada's international status was an agreement reached at the 1926 Imperial Conference allowing for Canadian sovereignty in international negotiations and affairs.

In the 1920s and 1930s, Canada established its own diplomatic relations with several countries, including the United States, France and Japan. In 1985, there were 118 diplomatic and consular missions (plus 37 honorary consulates) in 124 countries; many Canadian embassies and high commissions are accredited to two or more governments, thus permitting Canada to maintain diplomatic relations with 68 additional countries. One hundred and one countries have diplomatic missions in Ottawa and another 45 states have non-resident accreditation.

Membership in international organizations has entailed establishment of permanent Canadian delegations to the United Nations in New York and at the organization's European headquarters in Geneva. There are also permanent Canadian missions to UN agencies in Paris; the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction Talks, Vienna; the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Brussels; the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the International Energy Agency, and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Paris; and the European Community, Brussels. Canada also maintains a permanent observer