



**Statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States**

**By**

**Gilles Marhic  
Minister Counsellor  
Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations**

**at the Sixth Committee**

**on**

**Agenda item 80  
"The Report on United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching,  
Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law"**

**United Nations**

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**- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -**

Mr Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, Montenegro\*, Iceland<sup>+</sup> and Serbia\*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova Armenia and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

It has been almost half a century since the UN Programme of Assistance in Teaching, Study, Dissemination, and Wider Appreciation of International Law was established, with the goal of contributing towards a better knowledge of international law as a mean of strengthening international peace and security and promoting friendly relations and co-operation among States. Such assistance also contributes to strengthening the Rule of Law, as appears in paragraph 38 of the Declaration on the Rule of Law adopted by the UN General Assembly on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

This goal remains just as central to the role of the United Nations today as it did at that time. Indeed, knowledge of international law is a basic prerequisite for establishing the “conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained,” as envisaged in the Preamble of the Charter of the United Nations.

We therefore strongly support the Programme of Assistance as a key tool within the framework of the Rule of Law activities of the United Nations. By providing international law training and resources, the Programme of Assistance has made an important contribution to advancement of rule of law and to the work of the international legal community over the past 45 years.

We welcome the Report of the Secretary General concerning the implementation of the Programme of Assistance in 2013, as well as the adoption of Resolution 67/91.

We commend the Office of Legal Affairs, and in particular the Codification Division, for its efforts to strengthen and revitalize its activities under the Programme of Assistance in order to meet the changing needs of the international legal community in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

We are particularly pleased to note the use of modern technology for this purpose. The establishment and continuous expansion of the Audiovisual Library of International Law is an especially significant achievement, offering easy access to a vast range of legal resources, free of charge. We note that, as set out in the Report of the Secretary General, the Audiovisual Library has been accessed by over 800,000 users in 192 member States. This statistic accords with our view that the Audiovisual Library has already become an important resource for the legal community, including students, international law practitioners and even historians, and we encourage continued attention by the Codification Division to this project.

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\* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

<sup>+</sup> Iceland continues to be a member of EFTA and the European Economic Area.

Furthermore, we note with appreciation the achievements of the Codification Division with respect to its publishing programme, in particular the desktop publishing initiative, which has greatly enhanced the timely issuance of its legal publications. We also welcome the efforts of the Codification Division to achieve greater cost-efficiencies with respect to the International Law Fellowship Programme, and we note the contributions of the ICJ Registry, the Hague Academy of International Law, and the Carnegie Foundation in this regard.

We note that the Division organised a Regional Course for Asia-Pacific in Bangkok at the end of 2012 and one for Africa in Addis Ababa in April 2013.

We would also like to acknowledge the contribution of the Hamilton Shirley Amerasinghe Memorial Fellowship on the Law of the Sea, to the wider appreciation and application of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the sea, and the work of DOALOS in this regard. We also note that two countries have made contributions for the Hamilton Shirley Amerasinghe Memorial Fellowship since the previous report.

The need for international law training and dissemination of legal resources is a constant one. As is clear from the above, we are of the view that the Programme of Assistance is an important activity of the United Nations in this area for the benefit of all States, whether developing or developed. We will give full consideration to how to ensure that the Programme of Assistance has adequate resources, within overall existing resources and through voluntary contributions, to continue to meet the needs of the international community in the years to come.

We commend those States which have made voluntary contributions to the Programme of Assistance to date, and encourage others to consider such contributions in future.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.