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STATEMENT BY

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ON AGENDA ITEM 80

**UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME OF ASSISTANCE IN THE
TEACHING, STUDY, DISSEMINATION AND WIDER
APPRECIATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW**

New York, 6TH NOVEMBER, 2013

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ambassador Kanda, the Coordinator for the draft resolution on the Programme of Assistance regrets that he is unable to be here today. He has been called away on urgent business. Consequently, I have the honour to introduce, on behalf of the Bureau, draft resolution L.14 on agenda item 80 on the United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law.

As you know, the text of the draft resolution and an explanatory note were placed in the e-room on 25 October.

The draft resolution was issued as document L.14 in all official languages on 30 October.

As indicated in the explanatory note, the draft resolution that is before you today is similar to previous resolutions adopted by the General Assembly on this agenda item in recent years, in particular resolution 67/91 adopted last year.

My remarks will focus primarily on the new elements contained in the draft resolution.

The preamble contains three new paragraphs.

The third preambular paragraph recognizes the major contribution of the Programme of Assistance to the teaching and dissemination of international law for the benefit of lawyers in all countries, legal systems and regions of the world for almost half a century.

The fourth preambular paragraph emphasizes the important contribution of the Programme of Assistance, in particular the United Nations Regional Courses in International Law and the United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law, to the furtherance of the United Nations rule of law programmes and activities.

The ninth preambular paragraph notes with regret that the Regional Course for Asia-Pacific was cancelled in 2013 due to insufficient funds and that no Regional Course has been held for Latin America and the Caribbean for almost a decade.

In addition to these new paragraphs, the eighth preambular paragraph has been updated to include resolution 67/91 adopted last year.

This paragraph notes with concern that the activities of the Programme of Assistance, in particular the United Nations Regional Courses in International Law and the United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law, cannot be sustained with the resources available under the current or the proposed programme budget, notwithstanding the successive resolutions adopted by the General Assembly on this matter over the past four years.

The operative paragraphs of draft resolution L.14 are also similar to the previous resolutions adopted on this agenda item, in particular resolution 67/91.

However, there are some important changes that take into account the serious financial situation which threatens the continuation of the United Nations Regional Courses in International Law and the United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law.

Paragraph 1 approves the guidelines and recommendations contained in section III of the report of the Secretary-General on this agenda item, in particular those provisions that are designed to strengthen and revitalize the Programme of Assistance.

As you will recall, section III of the report sets forth the specific activities mandated by the General Assembly under the Programme of Assistance that the Codification Division plans to conduct during the next biennium if it receives the necessary resources.

As indicated in paragraphs 35 to 38 of the report, the Codification Division plans to conduct the four traditional training courses in 2014 and in 2015, namely:

- (1) The International Law Fellowship Programme,
- (2) The United Nations Regional Course in International Law for Africa,
- (3) The United Nations Regional Course in International Law for Asia-Pacific, and
- (4) The United Nations Regional Course in International Law for Latin America and the Caribbean.

As further indicated in paragraph 40 of the report, the Codification Division also plans to continue and further develop the United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law which provides international law training and research materials via the Internet for the benefit of over one million users in all 193 Member States.

As noted in paragraphs 41 to 43, the Codification Division plans to prepare the legal publications listed therein utilising desktop publishing software if it has the necessary staff and materials to do so.

Finally, as noted in paragraph 44, the Codification Division plans to continue to distribute hard copies of its legal publications and training materials to participants in its training courses and to academic institutions in developing countries if it has the necessary resources to do so.

Operative paragraph 2 authorizes the Secretary-General to carry out these activities without specifying the method for funding.

It is no longer possible to include the reference to "overall resources" contained in previous resolutions because the Trust Fund established for the Programme of Assistance has been depleted.

Operative paragraph 3 authorizes the Secretary-General to award a minimum of one scholarship in 2014 and in 2015 under the Hamilton Shirley Amerasinghe Fellowship

without specifying the method of funding.

Operative paragraph 7 reiterates the request that the Secretary-General provide to the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015 the resources necessary to ensure the continued effectiveness and further development of the Programme of Assistance, in particular the organization of the United Nations Regional Courses in International Law on a regular basis and the viability of the United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law.

Operative paragraph 8 requests the Secretary-General to issue the legal publications referred to in paragraphs 41 and 42 of his report. This paragraph also recognizes the importance of hard copy publications which are essential for lawyers in developing countries who have limited access to reliable high speed internet for purposes of electronic legal research.

Paragraph 11 commends the Codification Division for its desktop publishing, which has greatly enhanced the timely issuance of its legal publications, and requests that the necessary materials be made available to the Codification Division to ensure the continuation of this successful initiative.

Turning to paragraph 18, I would like to make an oral amendment to clarify this paragraph by expressing appreciation to Ethiopia for hosting the Regional Course for Africa and to Thailand for agreeing to host the Regional Course for Asia-Pacific, which as you know was cancelled due to lack of funding.

The first phrase of this paragraph would be orally amended to read as follows:

Expresses its appreciation to Ethiopia for hosting and to Thailand for agreeing to host the United Nations Regional Courses in International Law in 2013,

The rest of paragraph 18, which would remain unchanged, expresses appreciation to the countries which have agreed to host the United Nations Regional Courses in International Law for Africa, for Asia-Pacific and for Latin America and the Caribbean in 2014 and in 2015, namely, Ethiopia, Thailand and Uruguay. It also expresses appreciation to Costa Rica for its willingness to host the latter regional course in 2015.

Paragraph 25 requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session on the implementation of the Programme of Assistance, and following consultations with the Advisory Committee on the Programme of Assistance, to submit recommendations regarding the Programme in subsequent years.

Paragraph 26 reflects the conclusion of the Advisory Committee on the Programme of Assistance that voluntary contributions have not proven to be an adequate method for funding the Programme of Assistance, in particular the United Nations Regional Courses in International Law and the United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law, and recognizes the need to provide more reliable funding for those activities.

Finally, paragraph 27 provides for the consideration of this agenda item by the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session.

On behalf of Ambassador Kanda, I would like to express appreciation to the members of the Advisory Committee and all delegations as well as the Codification Division for their strong support for the Programme of Assistance which is of great importance to my country and to every country of the world.

I would also like to express the sincere hope that we can continue to work together during the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly to resolve the serious financial situation which threatens the continuation of the United Nations Regional Courses in International Law for Africa, for Asia-Pacific and for Latin America and the Caribbean as well as the United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law - before it is too late.

These activities can make a major contribution to a better knowledge of international law as a means of strengthening international peace and security and promoting friendly relations and cooperation among States -- if we can find an adequate and reliable method for funding them.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.