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STATEMENT

by

H.E. Ambassador Eden Charles

Chargé d'Affaires, a.i.

**Permanent Mission of the Republic of
Trinidad and Tobago to the United Nations**

on

Agenda Item 77:

**“The United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching,
Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law”**

in the Sixth Committee (Legal Committee)

**United Nations, New York
October 20, 2014**

Mr. Chairman,

Trinidad and Tobago aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Costa Rica on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and the statement delivered by the representative of Bolivia on behalf of the G-77 and China.

At the outset, we wish to express our gratitude to the Secretary General for the comprehensive report on the United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law, contained in document A/69/516.

We also take this opportunity to thank H.E. Ambassador Ken Kanda, Chairman of the Advisory Committee, for his guidance and excellent stewardship which has enabled us to achieve consensus on the way forward for this important Programme.

Further, Trinidad and Tobago commends the efforts of the Codification Division of the Office of Legal Affairs, in implementing some of the activities under the Programme of Assistance, in spite of insufficient voluntary contributions and limited financial resources.

Mr. Chairman,

As a member of the Advisory Committee, Trinidad and Tobago remains firmly committed to supporting the activities of the Programme of Assistance. To this end, we have made voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund which was established by the General Assembly to assist the Codification Division in discharging its mandate.

Trinidad and Tobago underlines the important role of the United Nations in strengthening the rule of law through the provision of technical assistance and training to Member States. We recognize that a greater understanding and appreciation of international law is fundamental to fostering international peace and security, facilitating cooperation among States and promoting the rule of law at both the national and international levels. In this regard, we reaffirm our full support for the activities under the Programme of Assistance, which aims to provide training and knowledge in the area of international law.

Mr. Chairman,

We are appreciative of the efforts of the Codification Division in enhancing the technical capacities of lawyers and diplomats through the provision of comprehensive training on several pertinent areas of international law. Trinidad and Tobago commends the work of the Division, which has organized several seminars, and study visits to the International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Court and the Permanent Court of Arbitration.

Pursuant to the Report of the Secretary General contained in document A/69/516, we note with deep concern that several activities under the Programme of Assistance were not conducted in 2014, due to inadequate funding, namely, the United Nations Regional Courses in International Law for Asia-Pacific and for Latin America and the Caribbean, and desktop publishing which is used to expedite the issuance of legal publications and make them available to the legal community. Further, we regret to note, that as a result of the decline in voluntary contributions, the United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law may be discontinued in 2015.

In this vein, we wish to highlight resolutions 68/110, 67/91 and 66/97 which requested the Secretary General to provide the necessary resources to fund the activities under the Programme of Assistance for the 2014-2015 biennium, namely the Regional courses in International Law and the Audiovisual Library of International Law, with a view to ensuring its continued effectiveness and development. To date, these programmes continue to suffer as a result of inadequate funding.

Mr. Chairman,

Voluntary contributions have not proven to be a reliable or sustainable means of financing the activities of the Programme of Assistance. No programme can subsist solely on voluntary contributions, which is often dependent on the national budgets of Member States. The current system undermines the effectiveness of this programme which was never designed to be funded primarily by voluntary contributions. In this regard, we underline the need to secure funding from the regular budget for this important Programme, which has benefitted developed and developing countries alike.

To this end, we fully support the recommendation of the Advisory committee contained in document A/69/516/Add.1 to revisit the issue of funding for the Programme of Assistance for the 2014-2015 biennium, particularly for the Regional Courses and the United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law for the year 2015.

Mr. Chairman,

We also endorse the recommendations of the Advisory Committee to request the Secretary General to include additional resources under the proposed programme budget for the 2016-2017 biennium for the organization of the Regional Courses in International Law for Africa, Asia-Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean each year, and for the continuation and further development of the United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law.

Further, Trinidad and Tobago supports the recommendation to request the Secretary General to include in the regular budget the necessary funding for the Hamilton Shirley Amerasinghe Memorial Fellowship on the Law of the Sea with effect from the biennium 2016-2017, should voluntary contributions be insufficient for granting at least one fellowship a year. This fellowship has been instrumental in training many lawyers who have become experts in