



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

**By**

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

**at the General Assembly Sixth Committee**

**on**

**Item 82**

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

**United Nations**

**New York**

**23 October 2015**

**- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -**

Mr. Chairman,

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

The Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, Montenegro\*, Serbia\* and Albania\*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the EFTA country Iceland, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, and Armenia, align themselves with this statement.

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

We renew our support to the Ambassador of Ghana as the Chair of the advisory Committee, and we express our gratitude to Ghana for its longstanding and active leadership of the Committee. This year, we celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UN Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination, and Wider Application of International Law established with the goal of contributing towards a better knowledge of International Law as a means of strengthening international peace and security and promoting friendly relations and co-operation among States. We welcome the proposals of the Codification Division to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Programme, including the handbook on International Law, the flash drive containing an extensive collection of International Law materials, and the presentation of the Audiovisual Library.

We reiterate our strong support for the Programme of Assistance and we commend its effective contribution to the Rule of Law, in particular by addressing the need for International Law training and dissemination of legal knowledge and material in benefit of all countries.

We welcome the Report of the Secretary General, which covers both the implementation of the Programme during 2015 and the activities planned for 2016 and 2017. 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.

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 are pleased to note the use of modern technology for this purpose. We note that, as set out in the Report of the Secretary General, the Audiovisual Library has been accessed by more than 1.3 million users in 193 States. This statistic accords with our view that the Audiovisual Library continues to be 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.

Furthermore, we note with appreciation that the Codification Division continued to disseminate legal publications and information through the Internet, and that it is currently preparing a handbook on International Law containing a collection of legal materials for distribution to academic institutions and government training centres in developing countries.

We note that the Codification Division organised a Regional Course for Africa in Ethiopia from 2 to 27 February 2015 and that an International Law Seminar for Arab States will take place in November this year in Egypt.

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 three countries have made contributions to the Hamilton Shirley Amerasinghe Memorial Fellowship since the previous report.

We commend States that have provided voluntary contributions to the Programme to date, and encourage all States to consider making more frequent or increasing such contributions in the future in order to sustain the projected regional courses and the Audiovisual Library of International Law.

However, the provision of voluntary contributions has declined in recent years. As recalled in UNGA resolution 69/117, voluntary contributions "*have not proven to be a sustainable method for funding the activities under the Programme of Assistance*". We welcome the Office of Legal Affairs' continued commitment to the Programme, including the provision of resources from within its budget. We thank once again the Advisory Committee for its work and we note the recommendations contained in the Report of the Secretary-General. We are confident that practical and sustainable financing solutions will be found for the biennium 2016-2017.

I thank you.