



**PERMANENT MISSION OF SINGAPORE
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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**STATEMENT BY MRS. NATALIE Y. MORRIS-SHARMA, COUNSELLOR,
PERMANENT MISSION OF SINGAPORE TO THE UNITED NATIONS,
ON AGENDA ITEM 82, ON THE UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME OF
ASSISTANCE IN THE TEACHING, STUDY, DISSEMINATION AND WIDER
APPRECIATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, SIXTH COMMITTEE, 23
OCTOBER 2015**

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1. Mr. Chairman, Singapore associates itself with the statement of the Lao People's Democratic Republic on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and of the Republic of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. My delegation thanks the Secretary-General for his report on this agenda item, and for the tireless efforts of the Codification Division of the Office of Legal Affairs, that is responsible for the implementation of the Programme of Assistance.
2. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Programme of Assistance. It is a landmark year and an appropriate time for reflection on how far the Programme of Assistance has come, and on the challenges and opportunities that lie in its future.
3. Singapore attaches great importance to the promotion of international law. The development of international law expertise is one of Singapore's national priorities. As a small State in an increasingly interconnected world, we see particular benefit in the conduct of international relations on the basis of a sound application of international law and its principles. To achieve this, Singapore firmly believes that there has to be early exposure of our younger talents to the workings of international law in the real world.

The development of greater expertise and specialisation in the various aspects of international law will enable these younger talents to participate more effectively in helping to influence and shape the rapidly growing field of international laws, principles and norms.

4. As we all know, the Programme of Assistance implements a number of valued activities to promote international law. The activities are even more valuable because they have been sustained over many years, and have earned a good reputation for themselves. One such activity is the Regional Courses in International Law. Singapore has previously sent our officers to the Regional Courses in International Law for the Asia-Pacific. We were disheartened when the Regional Courses for the Asia-Pacific had to be cancelled in 2014 and 2015 due to lack of funding, a fate shared with the Regional Courses for Latin America and the Caribbean.

5. My delegation welcomes last year's resolution requesting the Secretary-General to include in the programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 the resources necessary for the three Regional Courses to be held each year and for the continuation of the Audiovisual Library. We look forward to the proposed budget being approved, as recommended by the Advisory Committee on administrative and budgetary questions. With the necessary budgetary approval, there will be predictability in the delivery of the various elements of the Programme of Assistance. We believe that this will have positive ramifications on the securing of the necessary expertise for the delivery of the various activities and on outreach in terms of participants and readership.

Mr. Chairman,

6. My delegation has noted with great interest the guidelines and recommendations regarding the implementation of the Programme of Assistance for the biennium 2016-2017. We commend the Codification Division for its plans to continue with the International Law Fellowship Programme, the Regional Courses in International Law,

and the Audiovisual Library of International Law, amongst others.

7. In the various seminars organised by the Codification Division, my delegation hopes that there will continue to be best efforts to ensure representation of the major legal systems and balance among various geographical regions. We encourage the Codification Division to continue to invite prominent international law scholars and practitioners from different regions and legal systems to participate as lecturers. We think that there is room for greater diversity in the representation. This will take into account the fast-changing international context in which we operate, thereby assisting to maintain the highest standards of academic excellence and unique practical value that the training courses aim to achieve.

8. Further, we note the desire previously expressed by the General Assembly for not only States, but also international and regional organisations, universities and institutions, to give further support to the Programme of Assistance. We hope that the relevant organisations, universities and institutions will heed this call for support, particularly in the implementation and possible expansion of the Programme of Assistance. In this vein, it may be useful for the Codification Division to specify the areas of assistance in implementation that the relevant organisations, universities and institutions could voluntarily contribute to, particularly in respect of contributions in kind. My delegation believes that this would better enable such institutions to respond to the Secretary-General's periodic invitation.

9. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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