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Statement of Ms Jessica M. Elbaz

Secretary of the Advisory Committee on the Programme of Assistance

(19 October 2018)

Mr. Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

It is a great honour to have been appointed as the Secretary of the Advisory Committee on the Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law at the end of 2017 and, in such capacity, to address the Committee today.

My colleague from the Division of Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, Mr. Vladimir Jares, will address you concerning the Hamilton Shirley Amerasinghe Memorial Fellowship on the Law of the Sea.

Mr. Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

The Programme of Assistance is now in its 53rd year. As the debates in this Committee attest, the issues of international law facing States today are

increasingly complex. As a result, the need for international law training and research materials has correspondingly increased. As a result of the unwavering support of its Advisory Committee, chaired by the Permanent Representative of Ghana, and that of the Sixth Committee, the Programme of Assistance has been able to contribute to meeting these needs.

Mr. Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

It is thanks to the resources provided under the regular budget of the United Nations that the Codification Division was able to organize, once again this past year, four training programmes in international law – namely the International Law Fellowship Programme in The Hague and the three regional courses, for Africa, for Asia-Pacific and for Latin America and the Caribbean. Among the selected participants for these four training programmes, eighty-one (81) received full fellowships. These fellows came from 75 different Member States.

The cooperation of the United Nations regional commissions and that of the host countries, namely Chile, Ethiopia and Thailand, significantly contributed to holding the Regional Courses and we thank them for this support.

I also have the pleasure to inform you that the *Recueil de droit international*, the French equivalent of the *International Law Handbook*, was issued this year. This publication is a four-volume reference book containing a collection of key instruments of international law and is the principal resource used at the training courses. I invite delegates to have a look at the hard copy of the *Recueil*, available for viewing on one of the tables at the entrance to this room.

The electronic versions of the *Recueil* and the *Handbook* are available free of charge on the website of the United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law and we also plan to disseminate them to universities and national training centers in developing countries.

The preparation of the *Recueil* and the *Handbook* by the Codification Division was made possible by the generous voluntary contributions of several Member States for which we are very grateful. Ultimately, we hope to prepare the equivalent of the *Handbook* in the other official languages, if there are sufficient voluntary contributions.

Mr. Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

Only a limited number of lawyers can take advantage of the training programmes which I just mentioned. It is therefore important to continue to maintain and enrich the United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law. The Audiovisual Library offers on-line training, that is both high quality and free of charge, to an unlimited number of people across the globe. Since its creation in 2008, the Audiovisual Library has been accessed by more than 1.7 million total users in 193 Member States.

During the reporting period, fifty (50) new lectures were added to the Library. Moreover, with these new lectures, the linguistic and geographic diversity of the available content, as well as the range of topics covered, have been improved.

During the reporting period, significant efforts were also made to improve the accessibility of the Audiovisual Library. We had found that access to lectures in video format on the website of the Library was hampered by the need to have high-speed internet, which is far from being the case in all areas of the globe.

I am delighted to inform you that the Codification Division successfully completed its podcast project. All lectures are henceforth available free of charge as audio files, which makes them much easier to access even with only a weak

internet connection. The lectures can now be downloaded and listened to as podcasts on a computer or mobile device.

The Codification Division is very grateful to the General Assembly for having put the Programme of Assistance on the regular budget, which has made many activities possible. However, in order for the Programme of Assistance to reach its full potential, voluntary contributions continue to be indispensable. In this respect, the Codification Division would like to thank China, the Czech Republic, Finland, Ireland, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Switzerland, Thailand and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for their generous contributions during the reporting period.

Before concluding, I would like to take this opportunity to remind you that applications for the Regional Course for International Law in Africa, which will be held in French in 2019, will be accepted through this coming Monday, 22 October. We would be grateful if you would share this information with qualified candidates and encourage qualified female candidates in particular, to apply. We have placed brochures and application forms on the tables at the entrance.

I thank you for your interest in, as well as your support for, the Programme of Assistance.