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STATEMENT BY
H.E. MRS. MARTHA A. A. POBEE
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF GHANA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
ON THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S REPORT
ON UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME OF ASSISTANCE
IN THE TEACHING, STUDY, DISSEMINATION AND WIDER
APPRECIATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, ITEM 79
NEW YORK, 6TH NOVEMBER 2020

I thank you Mr. Chair for giving me the floor. Since this is my first time addressing the Committee at its 75th Session, let me also use this opportunity to congratulate you and the members of the Bureau on your election and to assure you of the full cooperation of my delegation.

I have the honour and privilege to deliver this statement in my capacity as the Chair of the Advisory Committee on the United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law, and also in my national capacity.

Mr. Chair,

The Fifty-fifth session of the reconstituted Advisory Committee was held on 9th October 2020 from 10.00am to 11.30.00 am, to consider the draft report of the Secretary-General, which is contained in document A/75/100, now available to all members of this Committee. The Advisory Committee, as usual, reviewed the activities of the Programme of Assistance undertaken during the reporting period as well as activities proposed in 2021, including their resulting administrative and financial implications. In the difficult circumstances posed for convening UN meetings posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, it was gratifying that the Advisory Committee

in the spirit of consensus successfully convened in-person to undertake its important work.

Despite the obvious challenges posed by the pandemic, interest in the Programme of Assistance did not wane, and it is worth mentioning that efforts were made to remain in communication with Member States in the course of the 74th Session, particularly as regards the convening of some Regional Courses affected by the pandemic. The large number of applications received for the International Law Fellowship Programme and Regional Courses in International Law demonstrate the continued relevance of the Programme, especially for developing countries and a further justification for its improvement. It is gratifying to note that the current provision in the UN Regular Budget makes it possible to hold all three Regional Courses.

I wish to take this opportunity to express, once again, appreciation to Ethiopia for hosting the Regional Courses in International Law for Africa and, to Thailand and Chile for their efforts in preparing to host the Asia-Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean and commend the Regional Commissions for their continued support.

Mr. Chair,

On the United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law (AVL) I am happy to note that it continues to be a unique element of the Programme of Assistance and has the potential of making high quality learning resources readily available to students and international law practitioners in every corner of the globe, at relatively low cost. As I noted last year, this potential can only be fully realized provided there is reliable internet connectivity. The launch of the podcasts of the Lecture Series two years ago was a step in the right direction, as it has significantly increased accessibility of the AVL for those who do not have the benefit of high-speed internet. Internet connectivity is a serious challenge that need to be addressed, particularly, catering for those without any internet connectivity at all. The AVL, coupled with international law materials available on USB flash drives and CD-ROMs and the desktop publishing facility, all together, remain strong elements of the Programme of Assistance and must be supported.

Mr. Chair,

There is no doubt that the Programme's impact across the globe is significant at various levels. I was particularly pleased to note that the Secretariat continued to devote attention to enhancing language and geographical diversity as well as gender parity in implementing the Programme. At the recent meeting of the Advisory Committee, Members welcomed the efforts of the Secretariat to balance the

representation of males and females among participants of the training programmes and to increase the number of female lecturers. This is an achievement that we need to celebrate, particularly, in the 25th anniversary year after the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. We are encouraged by the commitment of the Secretariat and we urge that the Programme of Assistance continues this positive trend to provide additional opportunities for women towards parity in all aspects of the Programme's activities.

Mr. Chair,

As consistently recognized by the General Assembly, the Programme of Assistance is a core activity of the United Nations, which constitutes an effective tool for promoting a better knowledge of international law and the conditions under which justice and respect for international law can be maintained as envisaged in the Preamble to the Charter. The work of the Advisory Committee has no doubt enhanced the effectiveness and scope of the programme, and I wish to take this opportunity to express Ghana's sincere thanks to members of the Advisory Committee for their continued commitment and support for the Programme over the years. As Chair of the Advisory Committee, we are especially appreciative of the constructive interventions from Member States as well as the several recommendations on the core activities of the Programme, that will inure to enhancing capacity-building and a wider reach to all regions and linguistic groups.

The Codification Division of the Office of Legal Affairs of the Secretariat continued to provide dedicated service in a range of areas for the effective implementation of the Programme of Assistance and in the year of COVID-19, we are appreciative of their focus and dedication. I wish to take this opportunity to thank Ms. Jessica M. Elbaz, Principal Legal Officer of the Codification Division of the Office of Legal Affairs, for her continued role as Secretary of the Advisory Committee. I also thank the staff of her Division for the good work done in implementing the Programme of Assistance.

In conclusion, **Mr. Chair**, I wish to reiterate the continued relevance of the Programme of Assistance. The interest shown in the various activities and the high number of applications received from Member States, particularly from Africa, attest to the fact that the Programme of Assistance remains one of the effective capacity-building tools in international law, whose scope and reach could be further enhanced. Ghana wishes, therefore, to urge Member States to remain committed to the programme and to ensuring that its activities are well funded through the Regular Budget and through other voluntary contributions.

I wish to also reaffirm Ghana's commitment to the POA. My delegation has traditionally served as the coordinator of the draft resolution for this item and we wish to continue to serve in this capacity. In this regard, Mr. Solomon Korbieh, Minister Counsellor

and Legal Adviser of the Permanent Mission of Ghana, from my understanding, has already opened and transparent consultations on the draft resolution and we count on the support and cooperation of all delegations.

Finally, Mr. Chair, I wish to take this opportunity to inform Member States that this will be my last address to this Committee and wish to thank all for your support in the past five years.

I thank you.