

Statement by Finland
on behalf of the Nordic countries

United Nations General Assembly 75th Session

Sixth Committee

New York, 15 October 2020

Agenda item 90

Strengthening and promoting the international treaty framework

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to the United Nations

New York, 15 October 2020

(check against delivery)

M(r/s) Chair,

I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of the Nordic countries, Denmark, Norway, Iceland, Sweden and my own country, Finland.

The Nordic countries thank the Secretary-General for his report 75/136 on a review of the regulations giving effect to Article 102 of the Charter pursuant to resolution 73/210 of 20 December 2018. The Nordic countries consider it important that a review of the Regulations, taking into account outstanding issues, has taken place. We welcome the Committee's further elaboration on this matter under the 75th General Assembly. Well-functioning and easily accessible registration and publication of treaties is an important element of the rules-based international order.

Article 102 of the UN Charter provides that every treaty and international agreement entered into by any Member after the entry into force of the Charter shall as soon as possible be registered with the Secretariat and published by it. Since 1945, more than 73,000 treaties have been registered or filed and recorded with the Secretariat. A significant number of treaties in force remain unregistered. The Nordic countries therefore appreciate the ongoing efforts made to improve the electronic treaty data base.

With respect to the review of the regulations, the Nordic countries are very pleased that the fourth amendment, which became effective on 1 February 2019, adapted the Regulations to developments in registration practice and information technology. The Nordic countries welcome these amendments to the regulations.

However, the Nordic countries note that there remain diverging views between Member States on the responsibility of translating treaties into one of the official languages of the Organization, and the issue on the requirement that all published treaties be translated into English and French were left without a definitive solution in the Sixth Committee's debate on the agenda item under the 73rd General Assembly. This divergence of opinion has also materialized in the written observations by States during the drafting process of the Secretary-General's report.

[According to current practice, the General Assembly resolutions and the Treaty Handbook only encourage States to provide the Secretariat with a courtesy translation in English and/or

French, but the obligation to translate still lies with the Secretariat. The proposed article 5(3) stated that "If the treaty or agreement was concluded in languages other than one of the official languages of the Organization, a translation into any of the official languages of the Organization shall be provided."]

The Nordic countries wish to emphasize that multilingualism is a core value of the Organization that contributes to the achievement of the goals of the United Nations. Although the Nordic Countries understand that the requirement that the full texts of all published treaties be translated into English and French imposes a heavy burden on the Secretariat, we are of the opinion that the current practice is important for the transparency of international law and accessibility of treaties.

The Nordic countries further consider that the call for Member States to provide, where available, courtesy translations in English and/or French of treaties submitted for registration could be included in the Regulations. In this regard, the Nordic countries welcome the possible options to review the regulations as identified in the report of the Secretary-General.

The Nordic countries continue to support the efforts of the Secretary-General and the Sixth Committee on this subject.

The Nordic countries believe a review to update the current regulations in general to reflect the evolution of practice regarding registration and modern technological developments, clarifies and simplifies the procedural requirements for registration and facilitate further use of electronic resources in the process.

Thank you.