

*Translated from French*

**Contribution of the Kingdom of Belgium to the report requested in paragraph 12 of General Assembly resolution 73/210 of 20 December 2018**

As requested in the note verbale of 27 June 2019 from the Office of Legal Affairs (LA/TR/230/Regulations/2019-2) concerning strengthening and promoting the international treaty framework, Belgium has the honour to submit the following observations.

Belgium welcomes the review of the regulations to give effect to Article 102 of the Charter following the adoption of General Assembly resolution 73/210.

Belgium supports the objectives, recalled in the preamble to resolution 73/210, of the expeditious processing, registration and publication of treaties and treaty-related actions.

Belgium firmly believes that shorter publication delays should not be achieved at the expense of the objectives and principles of transparency, accessibility of the law and multilingualism, recalled in resolution 73/210.

Any review of the regulations to give effect to Article 102 of the Charter should not create new obligations for Member States and international organizations. Such new obligations could restrict the ability of some Member States to fulfil their obligations under Article 102 of the Charter, resulting in fewer treaties being sent to the Secretariat for registration and in a greater registration backlog.

Belgium believes that any recommendation to abolish the requirement to translate treaties into English and French provided for in article 12, paragraph 1, of the regulations to give effect to Article 102 the Charter should be avoided. Indeed, the Secretariat and the International Court of Justice need to have access to treaties registered and published in their working languages, which are French and English, as recalled in resolution 71/328, cited in the preamble to resolution 73/210.

The abolition of the English and French translation requirement, envisaged as a possible amendment and mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General of 11 May 2017, must not be seen as a potential avenue for reform.

In reference to depositary obligations, article 1, paragraph 3, of the regulations to give effect to Article 102 of the Charter states that “when a treaty or international agreement designates a

depository, the depository is encouraged to effect registration unless otherwise provided in the treaty or international agreement or agreed by its parties.” Belgium believes that it is preferable not to change the obligations for depositaries, as currently set out.

Belgium is of the opinion that the registration of treaties by the depository should be simply “encouraged”, and not become a requirement. Such a requirement would not be in accordance with article 77 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties.

Belgium takes this opportunity to convey to the Office of Legal Affairs the renewed assurances of its highest consideration.

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