



PERMANENT MISSION OF FINLAND
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
NEW YORK

PCORMY2K-25

VERBAL NOTE

The Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations, and has the honour to refer to the note LA/TR/230/Regulations/2019-2 dated 27 June 2019 requesting Member States to provide information and observations in connection with the Regulations to give effect to Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations annexed to the General Assembly resolution 73/210 of 20 December 2018.

Finland considers it important that a review of the Regulations has taken place, and that the fourth amendment, which became effective on 1 February 2019, adapts the Regulations to developments in registration practice and information technology. We welcome the Committee's further elaboration on this issue under the 75th General Assembly.

Finland recalls that the issue 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 74th General Assembly. These issues were elaborated in particular in Articles 5(3) and 12 of the draft Regulations that were annexed to the draft resolution 73/210.

The main concerns remain 1) how can the burden of the Secretariat to provide a French and English translation of all published treaties be reduced; 2) while at the same time maintaining the required degree of transparency of international law and accessibility of treaties.

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."

Although Finland understands that the requirement that the full texts of all published treaties be translated into English and French imposes a heavy burden on the Secretariat, Finland remains concerned that if the translation requirement was directed at parties to the agreements being registered, this could hinder member state's willingness to register treaties. Finland also remains concerned that if the requirement that all published treaties be translated into English and French is removed, or other alternative measures adopted, the transparency of international law and accessibility of treaties might suffer disproportionately. For the above-mentioned reasons, Finland is of the opinion that the current practice should be continued. Finland further considers 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.

The Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations the assurance of its highest consideration.

24 February 2020



Office of Legal Affairs of the UN