



**KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA**  
**PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**327 East 58<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, NY 10022**  
**TEL: (212) 336-0777 FAX: (212) 759-7672**



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STATEMENT BY

**HIS EXCELLENCY MR. SOVANN KE**  
AMBASSADOR, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF THE KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

ON BEHALF OF  
THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS (ASEAN)

SIXTH COMMITTEE  
AGENDA ITEM 81  
UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME OF ASSISTANCE IN THE TEACHING,  
STUDY, DISSEMINATION AND WIDER APPRECIATION OF  
INTERNATIONAL LAW

76<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

NEW YORK, 21 OCTOBER 2021

**Thank you, Madam Chair,**

I have the honor to address the Sixth Committee today on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

ASEAN would like to thank the Secretary General for his informative report A/76/404 on the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law.

As the report indicates, the implementation of the Programme of Assistance was greatly impacted by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic during this reporting cycle. We note that the traditional in-person training programs, namely the three United Nations Regional Courses in International Law for Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean, and the International Law Fellowship Programme, had to be cancelled due to the global spread of the virus.

ASEAN commends the Codification Division for its tireless work during this difficult time and for effectively addressing the unforeseen circumstances by providing remote self-paced learning curriculum to those participants whose training programs were cancelled as a result of COVID-19.

Although provision of remote learning tools was an appropriate short-term alternative during this global pandemic, remote self-paced learning curriculum should not become a de-facto substitute for live in-person trainings under the Programme of Assistance, nor should it be used as justification to reduce or cut the regular budget funds intended for the Programme of Assistance. ASEAN strongly supports financing of the Programme through the regular United Nations budget, and we encourage voluntary contributions.

As such, ASEAN would like to stress the importance of retaining all live in-person programs and fully resuming them once it is safe to do so. The use of information and communications technologies, including the United Nations Audiovisual Library, should be explored as a way to add value to live in-person trainings and not to serve as a substitute for them.

The Programme of Assistance, through its in-person trainings, provides an invaluable experience to the participants, who learn from one another through engaging discussion and sharing of worldviews on legal culture and traditions. In this way, the Programme of Assistance helps build close knit bonds between the participants, helping promote cooperation among future colleagues and fostering friendly relations among nations.

ASEAN fully supports the United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law as we believe it plays a key role in the organization's efforts to promote respect for the rule of law at the national

and international levels. The Programme engages qualified government lawyers and teachers of international law, particularly from developing countries, and in this way helps deepen knowledge and capacities in the field of international law.

As such, ASEAN welcomes the three Regional Courses in International Law for Asia-Pacific, Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as the International Law Fellowship Programme.

Unfortunately, because of COVID-19, none of these courses could be held in person during this reporting cycle. Nevertheless, ASEAN trusts that once it is safe to do so the Codification Division will resume live in-person trainings, giving priority to participants who were selected to participate this time but were unable to do so because of the pandemic.

We also note that the Codification Division has compiled information and launched a platform for the alumni of the training programs organized under the Programme of Assistance to exchange information, and disseminate training materials. In this regard, we welcome the online interactive sessions for alumni on lecture series which were organized and held by the Division, and a shared online repository of international law materials and publications established for the alumni network. ASEAN is certain that this platform will serve as a helpful tool for the participants of the training programs, including those selected during this training cycle.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Indeed, ASEAN attaches great importance to the promotion of international law through the United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wide Appreciation in International Law. ASEAN will continue to support the Programme with a view to further strengthening multilateral cooperation and friendly relations among nations.

**Thank you, Mr. Chairman.**