



REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

**STATEMENT
BY**

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**PERMANENT MISSION OF UGANDA TO THE UN
ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP
THE UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME OF ASSISTANCE IN THE
TEACHING, STUDY, DISSEMINATION AND WIDER
APPRECIATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW ,**

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[Please check against delivery]

Thank you, Mr. President, for giving me the floor to speak on behalf of the African Group on agenda item seventy-eight which deals with the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law (POA).

Mr. President,

2. To the African Group, the Regional Courses instituted under the POA, provide an important means for expanding the international law training opportunities available to lawyers from developing countries. In that regard, given the limited number of fellowships for the International Law Fellowship Programme (20) and the increasing demand for this international law training course (905 applications in 2024) we wish to call for more funding of the POA to meet the increasing demand.

The Regional Courses further provide training on a broad range of core topics of international law as well as contemporary issues of international law of common interest to the region to promote greater understanding and cooperation on these issues. This is the primary source of international law training for many diplomats and government legal advisers from developing countries, particularly those from the 33 of the 46 LDCs that are in Africa, who participate in these courses.

Mr. President,

3. The revitalization of the Regional Courses resulted in the establishment of four-week courses to be held for each of the regions on an annual basis with funding provided by the regular budget for a **minimum** of 20 fellowships as well as **additional fellowships** to be financed from any cost-savings achieved in regular budget funding including savings resulting from in-kind contributions.

4. We take note of the efforts of the Codification Division and its reaffirmed commitment to “make every effort” to increase the number of fellowships provided under the regular budget to meet the strong demand for international law training.

5. However, the African Group is deeply concerned that the RCIL Africa was conducted for less than four weeks in 2023 and 2024. The African Group emphasizes the importance of continuing to conduct the Regional Course for four weeks in 2025 and subsequent years.

6. The African Group is also concerned about the limited participation in RCIL Africa which can accommodate as many as 30 participants. The African

Group encourages the Codification Division to provide additional fellowships from regular budget savings to maximize the value of this essential training course for as many African countries as possible, particularly the 33 LDCs in Africa.

7. The African Group notes with appreciation the generous in-kind contributions provided by Thailand as the host country of RCIL Asia-Pacific with respect to accommodation and meals for fellows, ground transportation, etc. This would constitute significant cost-savings in regular budget funding that should make it possible for the Codification Division to fulfill its commitment to increase the number of fellowships provided by the regular budget. We encourage the host Member States to continue considering such and similar contributions.

8. The revitalization of the Regional Courses involved the designation of permanent venues in the host countries for the Regional Economic Commissions to benefit from the economic efficiencies and savings resulting from conducting the courses at the UN RECs which share a common mandate for promoting development and education in the region. We commend the Economic Commission for Africa for its continuing support for RCIL Africa which results in cost-savings and efficiencies for conducting this course.

9. For the sake of transparency and to ensure the most effective use of regular budget funding approved by the General Assembly for the Programme of Assistance, the African Group calls on the Secretariat to provide specific information in the report to be considered by the Sixth Committee in future draft reports to be considered initially by the Advisory Committee, on the cost-savings resulting from Thailand's voluntary contribution and how these funds have been used to further expand the activities under POA, in accordance with relevant General Assembly resolutions and Secretary-General's reports.

Mr. President,

10. The African Group commends the Codification Division for its recognition of the importance of providing hard copies of books for lawyers in developing countries with limited access to reliable, affordable Internet. The draft report indicates that the *International Law Handbook* is disseminated to academic institutions and government training centers in developing countries. For the sake of transparency, we request the Secretariat to provide specific information in this year's report and future draft reports on the paper copies that were provided to academic institutions and government training centers in developing countries.

Mr. President,

11. It would be recalled that the Secretary-General convened the global Summit on Transforming Education to address the global education crisis and the lack of progress on Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) on education by renewing the collective commitment and joint action from 17 to 19 September 2022. The African Union held a high-level side event to focus on the specific challenges of Africa in addressing the global education crisis and bridging the gap in the attainment of education-related objectives in Africa, including SDG4, on 20 September 2022. The African Union subsequently adopted Education as the AU Theme of the Year for 2024.

12. The African Union has endorsed the second International Law Seminar for African Universities to be conducted by the African Institute in cooperation with the AU Office of the Legal Counsel and the Codification Division under the UN Programme of Assistance as a contribution to the AU Year of Education that aligns with the AU's strategic objectives and will be instrumental in achieving the AU's project goals. The African Union has also endorsed the *African Law Series* and the African Law Schools Project conducted by the African Institute of International Law as similar contributions to the Year of Education. The *African Law Series* includes the *African Law Handbook* prepared by the former Secretary of the Advisory Committee as a companion to the *International Law Handbook* prepared during her tenure. The African Group requests the Secretariat to include the *African Law Handbook* as part of the training materials for RCIL Africa.

13. The African Group believes this Seminar is important in strengthening the capacity of academic institutions in Africa to provide international law education requisite for the development of Africa and the achievement of the goals of the United Nations as well as the African Union in Africa.

14. The African Group notes that the first International Law Seminar for African Universities was conducted by the African Institute of International Law, in cooperation with the Codification Division and the African Union, in Accra in 2016 to coincide with the 50th Anniversary of the Programme of Assistance.

15. The African Group regrets that it was not possible to conduct the second Seminar in Ethiopia this year. Therefore, the African Group requests that the General Assembly mandate for the Seminar be renewed for 2025 to coincide with the 60th Anniversary of the Programme of Assistance with funding provided by available regular budget resources resulting from cost-saving measures or in-kind contributions as well as available voluntary contributions for the

Programme of Assistance and the Regional Courses. The African Group also requests the Secretariat to include this activity in requests for voluntary contributions to support the Programme of Assistance.

Mr. President,

16. We note that the Advisory Committee is entrusted with considering the draft report of the Secretary-General concerning the implementation of the Programme during the reporting period as well as the activities planned for the next year and the related administrative and financial implications.

17. In the interest of transparency and to enable the Advisory Committee to effectively perform the tasks entrusted to it, it is essential to have more complete information about the financial implications of the implementation of the Programme during the reporting period as well as the activities planned for the next year to ensure the most efficient and cost-effective use of regular budget funding provided by the General Assembly for the Programme as well as the use of extrabudgetary resources to expand the Programme to meet the increasing demand for international law training.

18. The African Group requests the Secretariat to include a breakdown of the regular budget used for the various activities conducted during the reporting period as well as the breakdown of regular budget funding for the planned activities in future draft reports. The African Group further requests the Secretariat to include specific information about the number of voluntary contributions used for specific activities conducted during the reporting period, plans to use voluntary contributions to expand the teaching and dissemination of international law the following year, as well as the current balance of voluntary contributions in the trust fund for the Programme of Assistance and its specific activities.

19. The African Group has noted that the regional distribution of the membership of the Advisory Committee has become outdated and emphasises the need for its review to reflect the current membership of the United Nations. In this regard, the Group recommends two additional members from Africa.

Mr. President,

20. In concluding, we wish to thank the Chair for the presentation of his report and thank members of the Advisory Committee for their hard work over the

period. Finally, we thank the Secretary of the Committee and his staff for their invaluable support to the work of the Committee.

I thank you.