

Statement by Mr. Yahya Aref
Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran
on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement
before
the Sixth Committee of the
79th Session of the United Nations General Assembly
Agenda item (78): "United Nations Programme of Assistance in Teaching,
Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law"

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Mr. Chairman,

The Non-Aligned Movement extends its appreciation to the members of the Advisory Committee on the United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law and its Chair, the Permanent Representative of Ghana to the United Nations, as well as the Codification Division of the Office of Legal Affairs for their continued commitment and support to the programme and its success.

The Programme of Assistance, as a means for promoting friendly relations and co-operation among States, is considered to be one of the most important activities of the United Nations greatly contributing to the promotion of enhancing the knowledge of international law while establishing conditions enhancing respect to principles of the Charter of the United Nations. As an undeniable fact, the Programme of Assistance also plays an important role in the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 16, especially regarding the promotion of the rule of law at the national and international levels. It would be remiss if we did not mention the valuable opportunity presented for participants in the Programme of Assistance's courses and seminars that promote the exchange of views, sharing of experiences and improvement of intercultural dialogue and understanding.

While placing emphasis on the strengthening of capacity building among all countries, especially within developing countries, the NAM encourages the Codification Division to also continue the provision of as much free and high-quality training as possible to a larger range of trainers around the globe. In order to obtain added tangible results from the Programmes, it is recommended that the audience of the courses and fellowships should consist of future decision-makers in their countries to the fullest extent possible as well.

It was unfortunate that years ago a number of the Programme's activities were cancelled as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, while virtual learning should never replace in person training, it would be beneficial to plan for the potential need to resort to virtual regional courses prospectively if they are the only route available for instruction under certain circumstances.

The Codification Division should continue to enhance the content of the Audiovisual Library, which is an invaluable training resource for individuals and institutions around the world. In this regard, the NAM welcomes the initiative of conducting off-site recording sessions and suggests that the suitable presentations made by the special rapporteurs of the International Law Commission to the Committee be uploaded to the Library. In addition, adding lectures in more languages would be another way to enrich the content of the Library.

The NAM is of the view that geographical diversity among lecturers represented in the Library and at the regional courses should be increased. Furthermore, lecturers should be representatives of all principal legal systems of the world.

Regarding the curriculum of courses, while the needs of each region should be addressed during courses, the synergies between international law and international relations could be included as a topic. Furthermore, under this topic, lecturers should elaborate on the development of international relations and theories on the basis of international law.

The NAM would also like to highlight the role of the United Nations information centers in Member States. These centers are fundamental tools for disseminating international law and provide access in multiple languages to resources such as the United Nations Digital Library and the Yearbook of the United Nations.

In conclusion, the NAM reaffirms its commitment to the Programme of Assistance and urges all Member States to ensure that the Programme's activities are well-funded through the regular budget and other voluntary contributions. It is essential to guarantee the continued funding for the Programme, given its importance to ensure the widespread dissemination of international law as a toolkit in international relations.