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Item 80

**United Nations Programme of Assistance in the
Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider
Appreciation of
International Law**

Statement by

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Minister Counsellor

Mission of Portugal to the UN

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Mr. Chairman,

Portugal would like to thank the UN Secretary-General for his latest report on the implementation of the *United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law*. We share the Secretary-General's views, particularly as regards the guidelines and recommendations enshrined therein.

Mr. Chairman,

As regards the dissemination of International Law, we would like to congratulate the Office of Legal Affairs (OLA) for its publications. These are valuable tools for legal practitioners, scholars and institutions, particularly from developing countries.

In our view, the dissemination of publications and information through the Internet, free of charge, is indeed an added value in a globalized era. The new OLA Codification Division website – where the publications *Legislative Series* and *Summaries of Judgments and Advisory Opinions and Orders of the Permanent Court of International Justice* can easily be found – are important developments for the promotion of the teaching, study, dissemination and wider appreciation of International Law.

Portugal encourages the Codification Division to keep considering options for revitalizing training activities. We are happy to hear that the possibility of designating permanent venues for the regional courses of International Law on a regular basis for Africa, Asia-Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean is under consideration.

Mr. Chairman,

We cannot stress enough the importance of the United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law, an initiative of the Codification Division, as a tool for the study, research and dissemination of International Law. We hope that in response to an ever-increasing demand, the enlargement of the archives of the Library continues.

For its part, the Hague Fellowship Programme plays a key role in providing for the study and research on a broad range of core subjects of International Law. This initiative can play a significant role in shaping up many of the legal minds around the globe, particularly those originating from developing or emerging countries. Hence, we were pleased with last year's UN General Assembly decision to maintain the number of fellowships available for this programme¹.

Mr. Chairman,

Although the significant accomplishments made, the Programme will be always, and indeed should be, a work in progress due to its own nature. There is still much to get done within the framework of this Programme, namely to attend to the increasing demand for International Law training and dissemination activities.

Therefore, we highlight the importance of the Programme of Assistance effectively reaching its beneficiaries, including with regard to languages, and the need to secure the representation of major legal systems and balance among various geographical regions, while bearing in mind the limited available resources.

Mr. Chairman,

As a member of the Advisory Committee, Portugal recognizes the major contribution of this very successful Programme of Assistance, now running for almost half a century for the benefit of legal practitioners and scholars throughout the world.

We believe that the teaching and study of core issues of International Law greatly contributes towards removing the underlying causes that could hinder international peace and security. Bearing this in mind, Portugal actively promotes the teaching and study of International Law core issues at the bilateral level, particularly with Portuguese speaking countries and other developing countries.

¹ A/RES/67/91, para. 14.

Mr. Chairman,

Portugal would like to highlight that voluntary contributions as a method for funding activities under the Programme of Assistance is no longer practicable and there is a need for a more reliable funding method through the regular budget. Activities as important as the regional courses on International Law and the activities of the Audiovisual Library of International Law cannot simply be discontinued for lack of funds.

All these initiatives covered by the Programme of Assistance contribute to promote International Law awareness and dissemination, and are decisive steps to the overall strengthening of international peace and security and to the promotion of friendly relations and co-operation among States based on a common understanding and respect of International Law.

After decades of experience and such a widespread recognition for the results achieved it is only natural that the Programme of Assistance finds the place it deserves in the UN regular budget, in accordance with the General Assembly resolution adopted last year.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.