

Statement of Canada  
Strengthening and promoting the  
international treaty framework

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### Strengthening and promoting the international treaty framework

Chairperson,

Canada is pleased to speak on this new item in which all States have a vested interest. We wish to thank the delegations of Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Italy and Singapore for this initiative

Article 102 of the United Nations Charter is very clear about the responsibility of States as regards the registration of treaties.

The rationale behind the registration and publication of treaties is two-fold and is aimed at:

- the promotion of transparency in the conduct of international relations; and
- the establishment of a comprehensive and central source of international agreements for practical, operational and academic research purposes.

It might be useful to remind ourselves collectively of the historical importance of the registration of treaties.

There was a scholarly movement in the 19th century to register treaties with the intent of clarifying the status of international relations between the various States and rejecting the practice of “secret treaties”. However, registration of treaties is really a 20<sup>th</sup> century international law development. The concept was included in the League of Nations Covenant and diplomatic historians’ sources indicate that by the time of the League’s dissolution, almost 5000 individual instruments had been registered. Canada understands that the League of Nations Treaty Series currently has more than 200 volumes.

With the creation of the United Nations came article 102 and the registration obligation, which has been complemented by regulations that give effect to this provision to this day.

Chairperson,

The essential parameters of Article 102, particularly as they relate to the role and obligations of States, are well-known. Indeed, only international binding instruments (as per the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties) that are in force have to be registered with the United Nations Secretariat. In addition all complementary documents to a treaty such as annexes and maps, for instance, must accompany a treaty for it to be admissible to registration. Finally, all corrections to a treaty also have to be registered.

States know and understand their responsibility; many of us have been slow at submitting our treaties for registration. During a period of fifteen months between January 1, 2015, and March 2016, Canada, according to our database, registered 396 treaties that had not been registered previously.

Dear colleagues,

As we discuss this matter within 6<sup>th</sup> Committee, we believe that we will wish to keep in mind that States do not all have the same resources, that other organizations register treaties; and that we may wish to explore revised practices that maximize what we can do through electronic communications.

With this in mind, my delegation is looking forward to working with other delegations and, in particular, exchanging ideas to ensure the full implementation of Article 102. Canada is committed to a rules-based international order.

Treaties represent the foundation of that order and their registration, consistent with Article 102 of the UN Charter, contribute to the stability of our world through transparency and access to data.