

## **AALCO's 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Session from 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> May, 2017 in Nairobi, Kenya, Concludes Successfully**

The 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Session of AALCO took place in the city of Nairobi, the capital city of the Republic of Kenya from 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> of May, 2017, and was attended by representatives from 26 Member States of AALCO and 4 Regional Arbitration Centers; and representatives from 8 Non-Member States and 4 International Organizations as Observers. This was the third time that Republic of Kenya proficiently hosted the Annual Session of AALCO. It was also the first Annual Session convened under the guidance and leadership of the present Secretary-General of AALCO, H.E. Prof. Kennedy Gastorn, who is the sixth elected Secretary-General of the Organization.

The Chief Guest of the Annual Session, H.E. Hon. William Samoei Ruto, Deputy President of the Republic of Kenya in his welcome address acknowledged the continuing significant role played by AALCO in the progressive development of international law, and AALCO as a tool of the “Bandung Spirit” and the collective will of the people of Asia and Africa. H.E. Prof. Githu Muigai, Attorney General of the Republic of Kenya, chaired the Session as the President of the 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Session of AALCO, and Mrs. Vilawan Mangklatanakul, Deputy Director-General, Department of Treaties and Legal Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand as the Vice President of the Session oversaw the proceedings along with H.E. Prof. Muigai, as well as presided over the Session in his absence.

During the course of the Session both organizational and substantive matters were discussed among Member States. Also, the Socialist Republic of VietNam was officially admitted to the Organization as the 47<sup>th</sup> Member State at the Session. The organizational matters included the Report of the Secretary General on the Work of AALCO, Budget for the year 2018, Report on the Work of AALCO's Regional Arbitration Centers, Report of the Chairperson of Working Group on International Law in Cyberspace, and Report by the Chairman of the EPG. Substantive matters included those that had been referred to the Organization by the Member States, which were namely, the Status and Treatment of Refugees, Violations of International Law in Palestine and Other Occupied Territories by Israel and Other International Legal Issues related to the Question of Palestine, Violent Extremism and Terrorism (Legal Aspects), and International Law in Cyberspace, Selected Items on the Agenda of the International Law Commission, and The International Criminal Court: Recent Developments. Side-Events on the topic “Promoting Rule of Law in Asia and Africa – Japan's Contribution” hosted by the Government of Japan, and on the topic “Combating Illegal Trade on Wild Fauna and Flora through Co-operation under International Law Framework”, co-hosted by the Government of the Republic of Kenya and the Government of People's Republic of China were also held during the Session.

The following AALCO publications were released during the Session: Yearbook of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (2016, Vol. XIV); AALCO Journal of International Law (2015, Vol.4, Issue 2); and Two Special Studies (i) “Legality of Prolonged Israeli

Occupation of the Occupied Palestinian territory and its Colonial Practices under International Law and International Humanitarian Law”; and (ii) International Law in Cyberspace.

The Member States in general commended the Secretary General for his constructive efforts to expand the activities of the Organization and increase its membership since assuming office. They acknowledged the significant role played by AALCO in promoting the rule of law in Asia and Africa, and also expressed their continuing confidence in AALCO as an Organization that would continue to assist its Member States, echo the voices of the Asian and African States before the international community, especially the International Law Commission, and contribute to the overall development of international law.

At the end of the fruitful deliberations between Member States a series of Resolutions on budgetary, administrative and substantive topics were adopted by consensus. The draft summary report of the Fifty-Sixth Annual Session was also placed for the consideration of Member States. The Member States adopted the draft summary report and thereafter they were requested to send in their written comments on the same to the Secretariat within one month, that is, 5<sup>th</sup> June, 2017, after which it would be finalized. It was additionally decided that going forward there would be no Resolutions providing a mandate on substantive topics, instead only recommendations would be adopted thereon in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Statutory Rules of AALCO.