

ASIAN-AFRICAN
LEGAL CONSULTATIVE
ORGANIZATION
(AALCO)



INFORMATION
BROCHURE

Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO)

Member States

Arab Rep. of Egypt	Nepal
Bahrain	Nigeria
Bangladesh	Oman
Brunei Darussalam	Pakistan
Cameroon	Philippines
People's Republic of China	Qatar
Cyprus	Republic of Korea
D.P.R. Korea	Saudi Arabia
Gambia	Senegal
Ghana	Sierra Leone
India	Singapore
Indonesia	Somalia
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	South Africa
Iraq	Sri Lanka
Japan	State of Palestine
Jordan	Sudan
Kenya	Syria
Kuwait	United Republic of Tanzania
Lebanon	Thailand
State of Libya	Türkiye
Malaysia	Uganda
Mauritius	VietNam
Mongolia	Yemen
Myanmar	

Permanent Observers

Australia
New Zealand

Milestones

18-24 April, 1955: The Asian-African Conference, held in Bandung, Indonesia.

15 November, 1956: Constitution of the Asian Legal Consultative Committee.

18-27 April, 1957: First session of the Committee, is inaugurated by Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, the then Prime Minister of India; decided to situate the Secretariat of the Committee in New Delhi, India.

19 April, 1958: The Statutes of the Committee were amended as to include participation of the countries in the African continent and name of the Committee consequently changed to Asian African Legal Consultative Committee (AALCC).

13 October, 1980: AALCC accorded Permanent Observer status by the United Nations General Assembly.

25-30 May, 1981: The Twenty Second Annual Session of AALCC held in Colombo made the Committee a permanent body.

26 April, 2000: Headquarters Agreement signed between the AALCC and the Government of India.

24 June, 2001: In view of the growing stature and status of AALCC, its name changed to Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO).

2006: Golden Jubilee Year of AALCO and the inauguration of its permanent Headquarters in New Delhi.

August, 2009: Putrajaya Declaration made at the Forty Eighth Annual Session held in Malaysia.

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Dr. Kamalinne Pinitpuvadol
Secretary-General

Message

The Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO) was constituted on 15 November 1956 to realise the international legal aspirations of the historical Bandung Conference. Established to foster the codification and progressive development of international law from an Afro-Asian perspective, AALCO has over the years been at the forefront of promoting a deeper engagement with international law in a manner that best reflects the diverse and inclusive spirit of the two great continents. The 'Bandung Spirit', which embodies the principles such as the Charter of the United Nations as well as sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations, remains as a clarion call of solidarity and friendship is our motivating credo and forms the philosophical ethos of our existence.

Over the years, AALCO has had the opportunity to further its mandate by engaging in diverse areas of international law. Our codification efforts on different topics have been well appreciated by the international community. The work programme of AALCO has an impressive list of eighteen topics that lie at the heart of our international law work and we continuously work with our Member States in developing these topics in a manner that best reflects their collective aspirations. As we move ahead, it's our mission to reimagine the meaning and purpose of the 'Bandung Spirit' to include new and emerging dimensions of international law in our mandate. We remain open to new ideas that may arise on this front.

The Information Brochure that I present to you is a miniature portrayal of the Organization in a printed format. It gives a succinct idea of our institutional framework in an easy to read format and I hope it will facilitate a wider reach for the Organization. I sincerely request each one of you to engage with AALCO in a manner that facilitates the growth of international law for the Afro-Asian region. In the end there is nothing greater for the States of Asia and Africa than the growth and development of international law, which is an idea that has been wholeheartedly embraced by the States of these two mighty continents.

Thank you!


(Kamalinne Pinitpuvadol)

GENERAL INFORMATION

Historical Background

The Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO) started its journey as the Asian Legal Consultative Committee (ALCC), which was constituted on 15 November, 1956, as a tangible outcome of the historic Bandung Conference, held in Indonesia in April 1955. The ALCC was constituted by the Governments of Burma (now Myanmar), Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), India, Indonesia, Iraq, Japan and United Arab Republic (now Arab Republic of Egypt and Syria). It was a body of legal experts, advisory in nature, established to deal with international law issues referred to it by its Member States, and to facilitate the exchange of views and information on matters of international law, which were of common concern to the participating countries. Later, in 1958, the Statutes of the ALCC were amended so as to include the participation of African nations, and consequently, its name changed to Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee (AALCC).



Bandung Conference in action



Silver Jubilee Celebrations of 1955 Bandung Conference and the 21st Session of AALCO (Jakarta, 1980)

The AALCC was originally established as a non-permanent committee for a term of five years. However, this term was further extended on four occasions until 1981, when at its Colombo Session; it was decided to place the Committee on a permanent footing. That decision necessitated a revision of the original Statutes and Statutory Rules - the revised versions adopted in 1987 and 1989 respectively. Owing to the growing stature and status of the Committee - at its Fortieth Session, held at its Headquarters in New Delhi in 2001, the name of the Committee was changed to Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO).

Functions and Purposes

The Functions and Purposes of the Organization are as follows:

- To serve as an advisory body to its Member States in the field of international law and as a forum for Asian-African cooperation in legal matters of common concern;
- To consider and deliberate on issues related to international law that may be referred to the Organization by the Member States and to make such recommendations to the governments as may be deemed necessary;
- To exchange views, experiences and information on matters of common concern having legal implications and to make recommendations thereto if deemed necessary;
- To communicate with the consent of the governments of the Member States, the views of the Organization on the matters of international law referred to it; to the United Nations and other institutions and international organizations;
- To examine subjects which are under consideration of the International Law Commission and to forward the views of the Organization to the Commission; and to consider the reports of the Commission and to make recommendations regarding them, wherever necessary, to the Member States; and
- To undertake, with the consent of/or at the request of Member States, such activities as may be deemed appropriate for the fulfillment of the functions and purposes of the Organization.

There are three ways in which a matter is placed on the Work Programme of AALCO:

- Reference by a Member State
- *Suo-motu* initiative of the Secretary-General
- Through follow-up of the work of the International Law Commission

In order to fulfill the objectives and carry out the functions of the Organization as set out above – the Secretariat prepares studies on topics which are of relevance to the Member States and are referred to the Secretariat by them, and which may also appear on the agenda for the Annual Sessions. These studies assist Member States in dealing with matters concerning international law, and some of them form the background material for deliberations at the Annual Sessions. The Member States, after the deliberations at the Annual Sessions, adopt resolutions which set out the directions for the Secretariat to implement the work programme agreed upon by the Member States.

Current Work Programme

The current work-programme of the Organization includes the following topics:

- Work of the International Law Commission
- The Law of the Sea
- The Environment and Sustainable Development
- Expressions of Folklore and its International Protection
- 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
- Legal Protection of Migrant Workers
- Extraterritorial Application of National Legislation: Sanctions Imposed Against Third Parties
- Violent Extremism and Terrorism (Legal Aspects)
- Establishing Cooperation Against Trafficking in Women and Children
- The International Criminal Court: Recent Developments
- An Effective International Legal Instrument Against Corruption
- International Law in Cyberspace
- The Work of UNCITRAL and Other International Organizations in the Field of International Trade Law
- The WTO as a Framework Agreement and Code of Conduct for World Trade
- Managing Global Financial Crises: Sharing of Experience
- Human Rights in Islam
- Peaceful Settlement of Disputes

Membership

Forty-seven countries from Asia and Africa are presently the Members of the Organization. Membership of the Organization is open to all Asian and African States desirous of participating in the Organization in accordance with its Statutes and Statutory Rules. Any such State desirous of membership has to address a written communication to the Secretary-General of the AALCO intimating its desire to participate in the Organization and stating its acceptance of the Statutes and Statutory Rules. When such a communication is received, it is circulated among the Member Governments with a request for submission of their comments for the same within six weeks. Unless at least one-third of the Member States object to such membership, the State concerned is declared admitted as a Member State.

Advantages of AALCO Membership

- **As a forum of Afro-Asian Legal Consultation**

It is one of the basic functions of the AALCO to coordinate the viewpoints of the Asian and African States on important issues of international law. As the membership of the Organization is open to all countries from Asia and Africa continents, it is, in effect, a specialized regional organization in the field of law of the Asian and African region. Deliberation in the Organization and the resolutions adopted by it greatly assist the Governments of the Member States to put forward an agreed view in the light of Asian-African States on international legal questions.

- **Member Governments can refer any legal problem of interest to them**

Member Governments can ask the Organization to consider any legal problem of interest to them by means of a reference under Article I (a) of the Statutes of the Organization. When such a reference is made, the Organization is obliged to consider the subject and give its views thereon.

- **Member Governments can refer any legal matter of common interest**

A Member Government can also request the Organization to take up legal matters of common interest for exchange of views and information by making reference under Article I (b) of the AALCO's Statutes. By means of such a reference, a Member Government can raise any legal issue, which may have a bearing on the common interest of the Asian-African region, before the Organization and thereby focus attention to the issue so raised.

- **Assistance to Member Governments in considering the Reports of the International Law Commissions etc.**

The Organization assists the Member Governments in considering the reports of the International Law Commission and formulating their views on the topics of interest which come up before the United Nations, the Specialized Agencies and other agencies and organs of the United Nations, such as the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL).

- **Advisory Service by the AALCO Secretariat**

The Organization has also authorized its Secretariat to assist the Member Governments on any legal problems on which they may desire assistance, by compiling and furnishing to them the relevant data and information.

Finances

The Organization's finances are met from three sources, namely:

- (i) The annual budget, contributions for which come from all Member States;
- (ii) Voluntary contributions, which may be made by any Member State/s including contribution in the form of deputation of officers or office equipments; and
- (iii) Special budget for specific purposes such as for the Arabic Fund.

All members are committed to contribute towards the annual budget. Each Member's contribution is decided on the basis of an agreed scale as per their economic situation. The Member States from Arabic-speaking countries also contribute to the Arabic budget, which is dedicated to the translation of official documents to Arabic and interpretation purposes during the Annual Session. All other financial contributions are given on a voluntary basis.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Annual Sessions

The Annual Session of AALCO is its plenary organ, and also the highest decision making body. The resolutions adopted during the Annual Sessions by the Member States on the organizational and recommendations adopted on substantive matters steer its work programme. The Annual Session also decides and elects the Secretary-General of the Organization



60th Annual Session held in New Delhi (HQ) (India)

The Annual Sessions are usually hosted by one of the Member States based on geographical rotation. The Governments of Member States appoint high-level representatives to attend these Annual Sessions. In addition, many observer delegations representing non-Member States and international organizations also participate in the deliberations.

Over the years, it has become a regular practice that members of the International Law Commission (ILC) participate in the Annual Sessions.

Meetings of the Liaison Officers

Member States nominate officers who are usually diplomats at their diplomatic missions in New Delhi, preferably with legal experience, to act as Liaison Officers with AALCO. Liaison Officers represent their governments during the intervals between Annual Sessions - in the meetings that are usually held once every two months at the AALCO Headquarters in New Delhi. These meetings provide regular avenues for the Member States to contribute to the substantive and organizational work of AALCO.



Secretariat

The Secretariat of the AALCO is responsible for the Organisation's day-to-day functioning. This includes preparation of technical studies and documentation, providing advisory services to the Governments of the Member States, organization of training programs and seminars and maintaining the necessary cooperation with regional and international organizations.

The Secretariat is headed by the Secretary-General elected by the Member States. He is assisted by Deputy Secretaries-General seconded by the Member Governments. Presently, the Governments of the People's Republic of China, Islamic Republic of Iran and Japan have deputed their Senior Officials to serve the Secretariat. The rest of the Secretariat staff consists of legal officers and other administrative and supporting personnel.

The Organization also maintains permanent observer missions to United Nations at New York and Vienna.

Secretary-General

The Member States elects the Secretary-General of the Organization on a rotational basis from the two regions of Asia and Africa for a renewable term of four years. The Secretary-General is the Chief Executive of the Organization and pilots the Organization in all correspondence, decisions, and programmes adopted by the Annual Sessions. The Secretary - General forwards the views and opinions of its Member States to the International Law Commission on matters under its consideration. An important part of his work is to promote cooperation with the United Nations, its specialized agencies and other inter-governmental Organizations.



Dr. Kamalinne Pinitpuvadol

The current Secretary-General is Dr. Kamalinne Pinitpuvadol from the Kingdom of Thailand. He took office on 1st January 2022.

His predecessors, namely, Late Mr. B. Sen, Late Mr. Frank X. Njenga, Mr. Tang Chengyuan , Amb. Dr. WafikZ. Kamil, Prof. Dr. Rahmat Mohamad and Prof. Dr. Kennedy Gastorn have made valuable contributions towards the Organization.



Late B. Sen
(1956-87, India)



Late Frank X. Njenga
(1988-94, Kenya)



Tang Chengyuan
(1994-2000, China P.R.)



WafikZ. Kamil
(2000-08, Egypt)



Rahmat Bin Mohamad
(2008-16, Malaysia)



Kennedy Gastorn
(2016-21, Tanzania)

Centre for Research and Training

The Centre for Research and Training (CRT), earlier known as the Data Collection Unit, was established by AALCO in 1989 to collect and collate information on international economic and trade instruments and the relevant legislations of the Member States. Over time its activities have been expanded to cover the entire gamut of the substantive activities of AALCO, including research and dissemination of information on topics of contemporary relevance.

In addition, the Centre is presently engaged in:

- a) Organizing training programmes on international law;
- b) Capacity-building initiatives;
- c) Convening workshops and seminars and arranging discussions and lectures by international law experts.

The Centre maintains and regularly updates the website of AALCO (both in English and Arabic). The website of AALCO is a window to its activities and helps build a stronger link between the Organization, its Member States, the United Nations and other international organizations.

Regional Arbitration Centers

One of the major achievements of AALCO in its programme pertaining to the economic field was the launching of its Integrated Scheme for Settlement of Disputes in the Economic and Commercial Transactions in 1978. Pursuant to that Scheme, it was decided to establish Regional Arbitration Centres under the auspices of AALCO, with the objectives to promote and conduct international commercial arbitration in the Asian-African regions.

Six such Centers have been established so far. They are located in Cairo (Arab Republic of Egypt), Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), Lagos (Nigeria), Tehran (Islamic Republic of Iran) and Nairobi (Kenya) and Hong Kong SAR, (People's Republic of China). The respective Host Governments recognize the Centres' independent status and have accorded them privileges and immunities. These Centres is headed by a Director, appointed by the Host Government in consultation with the Secretary-General of AALCO. The Directors of the Centre's present their reports on the functioning of the Centers at the Annual Sessions.



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ACTIVITIES

Annual Sessions

AALCO's Annual Sessions are known for the balanced nature of the items on their agendas and the constructive deliberations that take place therein. The Head of Delegation Meeting is held a day before the session. This meeting is attended at the highest level such as the Ministers/Deputy Ministers, Attorney Generals and Solicitor Generals from the Member States. This meeting considers the adoption of the agenda for the session and also discusses common concerns and/or matters pertaining to the issue of International Law. To date, Sixty Annual Sessions have been held.

ANNUAL SESSIONS OF THE ORGANIZATION					
Years	Sessions	Countries	Years	Sessions	Countries
1957	First	New Delhi (India)	1993	Thirty-Second	Kampala (Uganda)
1958	Second	Cairo (Egypt)	1994	Thirty-Third	Tokyo (Japan)
1960	Third	Colombo (Sri Lanka)	1995	Thirty-Fourth	Doha (Qatar)
1961	Fourth	Tokyo (Japan)	1996	Thirty-Fifth	Manila (Philippines)
1962	Fifth	Rangoon (Burma)	1997	Thirty-Sixth	Tehran (Iran)
1964	Sixth	Cairo (Egypt)	1998	Thirty-Seventh	New Delhi (India)
1965	Seventh	Baghdad (Iraq)	1999	Thirty-Eighth	Accra (Ghana)
1966	Eighth	Bangkok (Thailand)	2000	Thirty-Ninth	Cairo (Egypt)
1967	Ninth	New Delhi (India)	2001	Fortieth	New Delhi (HQ, India)
1969	Tenth	Karachi (Pakistan)	2002	Forty-First	Abuja (Nigeria)
1970	Eleventh	Accra (Ghana)	2003	Forty-Second	Seoul (Republic of Korea)
1971	Twelfth	Colombo (Sri Lanka)	2004	Forty-Third	Bali (Indonesia)
1972	Thirteenth	Lagos (Nigeria)	2005	Forty-Fourth	Nairobi (Kenya)
1973	Fourteenth	New Delhi (India)	2006	Forty-Fifth	New Delhi (HQ, India)
1974	Fifteenth	Tokyo (Japan)	2007	Forty-Sixth	Cape Town (South Africa)
1975	Sixteenth	Tehran (Iran)	2008	Forty-Seventh	New Delhi (HQ, India)
1976	Seventeenth	Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia)	2008	Extraordinary	New Delhi (HQ, India)
1977	Eighteenth	Baghdad (Iraq)	2009	Forty-Eighth	Putrajaya (Malaysia)
1978	Nineteenth	Doha (Qatar)	2010	Forty-Ninth	Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)
1979	Twentieth	Seoul (Republic of Korea)	2011	Fiftieth	Colombo (Sri Lanka)
1980	Twenty-First	Jakarta (Indonesia)	2012	Fifty-First	Abuja (Nigeria)
1981	Twenty-Second	Colombo (Sri Lanka)	2013	Fifty-Second	New Delhi (HQ, India)
1983	Twenty-Third	Tokyo (Japan)	2014	Fifty-Third	Tehran (Iran)
1985	Twenty-Fourth	Kathmandu (Nepal)	2015	Fifty-Fourth	Beijing (China)
1986	Twenty-Fifth	Arusha (Tanzania)	2016	Fifty-Fifth	New Delhi (HQ, India)
1987	Twenty-Sixth	Bangkok (Thailand)	2017	Fifty-Sixth	Nairobi (Kenya)
1988	Twenty-Seventh	Singapore	2018	Fifty-Seventh	Tokyo (Japan)
1989	Twenty-Eighth	Nairobi (Kenya)	2019	Fifty-Eighth	Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)
1990	Twenty-Ninth	Beijing (P R of China)	2021	Fifty-Ninth	Hong Kong SAR (China)
1991	Thirtieth	Cairo (Egypt)	2022	Sixtieth	New Delhi (HQ, India)
1992	Thirty-First	Islamabad (Pakistan)			

Meetings of AALCO Legal Advisers

Every year a meeting of the Legal Advisers of the Member States of AALCO is convened in New York during the General Assembly Session. Legal Advisers of non-Member States and representatives of the United Nations and its Agencies also attend this meeting. The meeting provides a forum for exchange of views on current issues of common concern to the Member States. The Secretary-General receives informal guidance from the Legal Advisers on various assignments to be carried out by the Secretariat. Since 2003, an AALCO-ILC Joint Meeting also takes place along with the Legal Advisers Meeting. ILC and AALCO have shared a longstanding and mutually beneficial relationship. AALCO has always forwarded the views of the Member States to the Commission. AALCO has active cooperation with the Sixth Committee of the ILC. AALCO also organizes side events at the sidelines of the International Law Week held in New York every year.

Seminars

Under the auspices of the CRT, seminars and workshops on the topics of contemporary relevance in international law are regularly convened. AALCO has jointly organized numerous seminars and workshops. To name a few of them:

- Webinar on General Principles of International Law and AALCO Member States
- Seminar on Asian-African Treaty Law and Practice



Training Programs

The CRT conducts training programs on various international law topics in cooperation with intergovernmental organizations and academic institutions. In 2008, the CRT initiated a training course on "General International Law" for officials of the Member States. In 2010, a training on the Humanitarian Law, a basic course on World Trade Organization, and a regional training programme on the Treaty Law and Practice were conducted. Since 2015, the Government of China has been hosting a fully funded training programme called the China-AALCO Exchange and Research Program on International Law (CAERP) for AALCO Member States every year. It aims to promote exchange and dialogue, share good practices, experience and knowledge, and enhance capacity-building in the field of international law among AALCO's Member States. In 2019, the first Japan-AALCO Training Course on Public International Law was held. It aimed at enhancing the development of International Law, including the peaceful settlement of disputes

PUBLICATIONS

Being a legal research organization, AALCO attaches great importance to its publications. It has constantly endeavored to enhance the content and quality of its publications. The Secretariat brings out important publications regularly, namely the Yearbook of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization and the AALCO Journal of International Law.

The Secretariat prepares the Reports and Verbatim Records of the Annual Sessions. The Secretariat also regularly brings out Special Studies on topics of contemporary relevance in international law.

Special Studies by AALCO include:

- Legality of Nuclear Tests (1964)
- South West Africa Cases (1967)
- Relief against Double Taxation and Fiscal Evasion (1967)
- Legal Guidelines for Privatization Programme (1994)
- Essays in International Law (1976, 1981, 1986, 1996, 2001 and 2007)
- A Study on Special and Differential Treatment under WTO Agreements (2003)
- Combating Corruption: A Legal Analysis (2005)
- Rights and Obligations under the UN Convention against Corruption (2006)
- A Preliminary Study on the Concept of International Terrorism (2006)
- Essays in Contemporary Issues in International Law (2009)
- Blockade of Gaza (2010)
- A Study on the Statehood of Palestine under International Law (2013)
- Unilateral Secondary Sanctions: an International Law Perspective (2013)
- Marine Biodiversity beyond National Jurisdictions: An Asian African Perspective (2016)
- The Status of Jerusalem in International Law: A legal Enquiry into the recent attempts to disrupt the status quo (2019)
- Extraterritorial Application of National Legislation: Unilateral Sanctions against Third Parties (2021)



AALCO Journal of International Law



AALCO Newsletter



Unilateral Sanctions against Third Parties



AALCO Yearbook

The Organization maintains a website at <http://www.aalco.int> for dissemination of information about the AALCO and its various activities.

Cooperation with other International Organizations

The scope of AALCO's activities has been broadened from time to time to keep pace with the needs and requirements of its Member Governments and an increasingly globalizing world. This has been especially so in international trade and economic law matters, international humanitarian law, international refugee law, international environmental law etc. The AALCO, as the only organization of its kind at an intergovernmental level, embracing the two continents of Asia and Africa, has also oriented its activities to complement the work of the United Nations in several areas. In the light of the Organization's growing status and functions, the General Assembly by a Resolution adopted at its thirty-fifth Session in 1980 decided to accord AALCO Permanent Observer Status at the United Nations. Following that, an item on "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization" is placed biennially on the agenda of the General Assembly.

The Organization has also established close relations with the United Nations specialized agencies and several intergovernmental organizations and reputed academic institutions and has concluded formal cooperation agreements / Memoranda of Understanding with 33 of them. These agreements provide for mutual consultation, exchange of documentation, and the right to representation at each other's meetings. They facilitate joint organization of seminars and workshops on the areas of mutual interests. AALCO also works in close cooperation with many organizations. These include:

- African Union
- Commonwealth Secretariat
- Council of Europe
- China University of Political Science and Law
- International Law Commission
- International Atomic Energy Agency
- International Committee of the Red Cross
- International Criminal Court
- International Maritime Organization
- International Organization for Migration
- Institute of International Law of Wuhan University
- International Council of Environmental Law
- International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea
- League of Arab States
- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
- The Hague Conference on Private International Law
- Allameh Tabataba'i University
- United Nations Environment Programme
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
- United Nations Industrial Development Organization
- United Nations Institute for Training and Research
- United Nations University
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
- United Nations Commission on Trade and Development
- World Intellectual Property Organization
- Xiamen Academy of International Law
- African Institute of International Law
- China Law Society
- International Seabed Authority
- Energy Charter Secretariat
- International Development Law Organization
- Doshisha University
- Rashtriya Raksha University



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