

**(ii) STATEMENT BY H.E. MAHER ABDEL WAHED, HON'BLE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT ON BEHALF OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE THIRTY NINTH SESSION OF THE AALCC.**

Hon'ble Dr. Najma Heptullah, Deputy Chairperson of Rajya Sabha,

Hon'ble Ministers

Distinguished Secretary General Amb. Dr. Wafik Z. Kamil.

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates and Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I take the floor on behalf of H.E. Farouk Seif El Nasr, Hon'ble Minister of Law and Justice, Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt, who was elected President of the Committee at its 39<sup>th</sup> session in Cairo.

He has expressed his regret at his inability to be here due to pressing engagements at home. On my own behalf, and also on behalf of my government, the Arab Republic of Egypt, I wish to thank the Committee for the opportunity it gave us to serve the interests of the Asian African States and particularly its legal community during the last one year. It is my pleasant duty to report to you briefly on its activities since our 39<sup>th</sup> session held in Cairo.

At the outset, I wish to place on record our deep admiration for the yeoman services rendered to the cause of the Committee by H.E. Mr. Tang Chengyuan, the former Secretary General of AALCC, who laid down office in May last year.

We are particularly pleased with the cooperation of the distinguished Secretary General H.E. Amb. Dr. Wafik Z. Kamil and his able team of Deputy Secretaries-General and Assistant Secretary General, as well as the legal officers and other staff of the Committee, which we received during this year to enable us to discharge our mandate as President of the Committee.

Following the successful conduct of the annual session of the AALCC at Cairo, the Committee organised a Meeting of the Legal Advisers of the AALCC Member States at New York in October 2000. The Legal Advisers Meeting deliberated on two important items: (i) Rationalization of the Work Programme of the Committee; and (ii) Jurisdictional Immunities of States and Their Property. The rapid pace with which changes take place in today's world, presents new challenges and makes it imperative that the AALCC attunes itself to respond to these emerging problems.

It is our desire that the Committee, while ensuring continuity in its choice of new areas for study, must also seek to identify topics that are of contemporary relevance and practical utility to the Member States. Against this backdrop, I urge the distinguished delegates gathered

here to closely examine the Secretariat's proposal on "Rationalization of Work Programme". As regards the item "Jurisdictional Immunities", I am pleased to inform you that the Legal Advisers' meeting witnessed very constructive exchange of views on the five core issues relating to the draft articles currently under consideration by a working group of the Sixth Committee. The presence of Prof. Gerhard Hafner, the Chairman of the Sixth Committee's Working Group on Jurisdictional Immunities and Prof. Ian Brownlie, Member of the ILC further enriched the level of deliberations on the subject.

Besides, during the intersessional period, the AALCC concluded cooperation agreements with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Currently, efforts are underway to finalise cooperation agreements with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

On the occasion of the signing of the cooperation agreement between AALCC and IOM, in October last year, a key note address on "The role of the IOM in ensuring respect for migrants rights through orderly migration" was delivered by Mr. Brunson McKinley. I am happy to note that the ties between the AALCC and IOM is further strengthened by their jointly hosting a one-day special meeting on the topic of migrant workers, which would be held the day after tomorrow.

Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen in keeping with past practice, the AALCC Secretariat in cooperation with the ICRC organised a Seminar on International Humanitarian Law to commemorate the 44<sup>th</sup> Constitution Day of AALCC. The seminar held at New Delhi on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2000 was widely attended by delegates from the AALCC Member States and other international organizations. The Seminar addressed key issues relating to:

- International Humanitarian Law;
- Challenges and perspectives in the Twenty-first century
- Anti-personnel land mines
- Protection of civilians in Armed Conflict with special reference to children

In February this year, an open-ended Working Group met at New Delhi to finalize the revised text of the Bangkok Principles on Status and Treatment of Refugees. The Working Group Meeting, held with technical and financial assistance from UNHCR, is the culmination of the exercise that began at Manila in 1996. It is hoped that this session would see the final adoption of the revised consolidated text of the Bangkok Principles.

We are pleased with the Secretary-General's active endeavours to seek membership of the French-speaking African States. I am confident that efforts towards enlarging the membership of AALCC would bear fruits soon. Given our common political and economic background, the AALCC could be a potential forum for the countries of the region to come together and examine international law related issues in an atmosphere of camaraderie and goodwill.

I am happy to inform you that the AALCC signed the Headquarters Agreement with the Government of India on 26 April 2000. We are confident that the Government of India would expedite the process related to the construction of the AALCC's Headquarters building in New Delhi. The early completion of the construction work would have a beneficial impact on the financial condition of the Committee.

As regards, the position of arrears relating to annual contribution by Member States, some Member Governments have responded to our appeals and cleared a portion of their arrears, and hopefully the other may also be in a position to clear their dues in the forthcoming year. Before I close, I wish to thank the Committee for the privilege and honour conferred on me to lead the Committee over the past year. Our government is, as always, committed to the promotion of the cause of the AALCC and we will continue to extend our full support to the future endeavours of the Committee.

We have a heavy agenda for the next five days and it is our desire that the attending delegations would, in their customary spirit of solidarity and brotherhood, transact business and make the session a very successful and memorable one.

Thank you.