

Nations and especially those which become the subject matter of Plenipotentiary Conferences. In this connection, mention may be made of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties and the Negotiations on the Law of the Sea spread over a period of eleven years. More recently, the Committee actively involved itself in the World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna in 1993 and its follow-up and the follow-up work related to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Brazil in June 1992.

The Committee's activities have also been devoted to the field of international economic relations and trade law and in this area the Committee has been working closely with various United Nations other inter-governmental organisations including the UNCITRAL. In addition, special items of importance to Member Governments have been taken up such as preparation of Standard/Model Contracts for use in international trade transactions relating to commodities and model bilateral agreements on promotion and protection of investments and Legal Guidelines for Privatization Programmes, formulation of schemes for industrialisation and organization of dispute settlement system in economic matters through establishment of Regional Centres for Arbitration and development of national arbitral institutions.

G. Current Work Programme

The current work programme of the Committee comprises the following:

- Preparation of notes and comments on agenda items before the Sixth Committee and items having legal implications for the annual session of the General Assembly;
- Follow-up of the work of ILC, UNCITRAL, UNIDO and UNCTAD, Hague Conference and UNIDROIT on legal issues and preparation of notes and comments as may be necessary;
- Periodic meetings of Legal Advisers of member governments;
- Training Programme;
- Rendering of assistance by the Committee's Secretariat to a Member Government on any Subject of particular interest to that government upon request;
- Preparation of Studies on Agenda items;
- Decade of International Law;
- Status and Treatment of Refugees;

- International Rivers;
- Law of the Sea;
- Mutual Co-operation on Judicial Assistance;
- Legal Framework of the Zone of Peace;
- Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace;
- Environmental Protection;
- Criteria for the distinction between Terrorism and People's Struggle for Liberation;
- Deportation of Palestinians as a violation of international law, particularly the 1949 Geneva Convention;
- Responsibility and Accountability of former colonial powers;
- Debt Burden of Developing Countries.

H. Publications

The emphasis in the work programme of the UN Decade of International Law has encouraged the AALCC to publish its studies on the basis of which various topics are discussed and debated. To attain the objective of encouraging study, dissemination and wider appreciation of international law, the Committee has been bringing out the study-oriented Reports of its annual sessions for the last few years. Also a very useful publication, 'Quarterly Bulletin' is being brought out on regular basis. The Bulletin contains information on the preceding quarter about the Committee's activities, activities of the United Nations, regional and international organizations and multilateral and bilateral agreements and conventions.

I. The Statutes

The original statutes of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee were drawn up in 1956. Efforts have been made from time to time, especially since 1972, to revise the Statutes to bring them into conformity with the changed structure of the Organization. At the Twenty-Second Session of the Committee, held in Colombo in May 1981, action was initiated to revise the Statutes on an urgent basis which culminated in the preparation of a revised text of the Statutes by an inter-sessional meeting held in New Delhi in September 1985. The matter was discussed at the Arusha Session in February 1986 and thereafter a communication was sent to all member governments for their acceptance of the text drawn up at the inter-sessional meeting.

The text of the Statutes as drawn up at the inter-sessional meeting held in New Delhi in September 1985 was thereafter approved at the Twenty-sixth Session of the Committee held in Bangkok in January 1987. The Statutes were adopted on 12th January 1987 and have since abrogated the Statutes drawn up in 1956.

J. The Statutory Rules

The Statutory Rules of the Committee which were drawn up in April 1957 remained unaltered over the years in spite of major changes in the functioning of the Committee. A decision was taken at the Colombo Session, held in 1981, that the Rules should be revised to conform to the pattern suited to an international organization. At the Kathmandu Session, held in February 1985, it was decided to entrust the task of revision of Statutory Rules to an inter-sessional Meeting. The meeting was held in New Delhi in September 1985 which was able to adopt the revised version of the Rules 1 to 3. That meeting had also requested the Liaison Officers to prepare a revised text of the remaining provisions of the Rules for consideration of the Committee at its Arusha Session. At that Session it was pointed out that the Committee itself would have to undertake the task of revision of the Rules.

A Working Group of the Whole established at the Twenty-sixth Session of the Committee held in Bangkok in January 1987, substantially improved upon the text of the draft statutory rules drawn up by the Liaison Officers. The report of the Working Group of the Whole was considered at the Twenty-seventh Session of the Committee held in Singapore in 1988. During that Session Rule 20 relating to the Secretary-General was adopted. Thereafter at the Twenty-eighth Session held in Nairobi in February 1989, the text of the Rules was adopted and the Rules were brought into force w.e.f. 1st May, 1989.

K. Arbitration Centres

Three Regional Centres for Arbitration have so far been constituted under the auspices of the Committee which are located in Kuala Lumpur, Cairo and Lagos.

These Regional Centres for Arbitration were intended to function as international institutions under supervision until they became autonomous institutions with their own governing bodies. The tasks entrusted to the Centres in the light of the overall objectives of the AALCC's dispute settlement scheme included:

- (i) Providing for arbitration under the auspices and rules of the Centres;
- (ii) Assistance and provision of facilities for holding of proceedings in *ad hoc* arbitrations under UNCITRAL Arbitration Rules 1976;
- (iii) Assistance in the enforcements of awards;
- (iv) Rendering of advice and assistance to parties who might approach the Centres;
- (v) Rendering of administrative services and secretarial assistance upon request to other institutions with which appropriate arrangements may have been made in regard to arbitral proceedings under the auspices of those institutions; and
- (vi) Promotion work in association with the AALCC Secretariat.

Promotional Work concerning the Centres

Although in the beginning the promotional activities in regard to the Regional Centres for Arbitration were primarily carried on by the AALCC Secretariat in view of its established contacts with Governments, governmental agencies and international institutions, over the years such activities have been left to be carried out by the Centres themselves so as to build up their image and prestige. At the inception of the Dispute Settlement Scheme, the foremost task was publicising the establishment and functioning of the Centres worldwide and this naturally required preparation and wider dissemination of promotional literature. Monographs and leaflets about the aims and activities of the Centres were prepared jointly by the AALCC Secretariat and the Cairo and Kuala Lumpur Centres and distributed widely. An international panel of arbitrators drawn not only from the Afro-Asian region, but also from countries with which the region has close trading and commercial links, was prepared and circulated to chambers of commerce and business associations worldwide. Articles were contributed by the AALCC Secretariat as well as by the Directors of the Centres to eminent arbitral journals and yearbooks. These efforts helped in making the Centres internationally known.

To make Kuala Lumpur an attractive venue for international cases in the South-East Asian region, the AALCC recommended to the Government of Malaysia to amend its Arbitration Act of 1952 to exclude arbitrations under the auspices of the Kuala Lumpur Centre from the supervision of the local courts and to accede to the 1958 New York Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards. Responding to

these requests, the Government of Malaysia amended its Arbitration Act in 1980 and adhered to the 1958 New York Convention in 1985.

The AALCC Secretariat has been periodically organising Seminars and International Conferences aimed at publicising the role and functions of the Regional Centres for Arbitration. In March 1984, the Secretariat in collaboration with the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) and the Indian Council of Arbitration organised a Regional Seminar on International Commercial Arbitration in New Delhi. At this Seminar the activities of the Kuala Lumpur and Cairo Centres were highlighted. In October 1989, the Secretariat in collaboration with UNCITRAL, UNCTAD, UNIDROIT and the Indian Council of Arbitration organised a Regional Seminar on International Trade Law which included the subject of International Commercial Arbitration as one of the topics. A presentation on the role and activities of the Regional Centres was made at the Seminar.

The Secretariat in co-operation with the Indian Council of Arbitration and with the technical support of UNCITRAL, UNIDO, WIPO and the World Bank, recently organised an International Seminar on "Globalization and Harmonization of Commercial Arbitration Laws" in New Delhi from March 31 to April 1, 1995. The Directors of the Cairo and Kuala Lumpur Centres were invited to make presentations on their Centres. A report of this Seminar has been reproduced in this Report under the subject "International Trade Law".

L. AALCC's Data Collection Unit

During the Twenty-eighth Session of the AALCC held in Nairobi (1989) the Government of the Republic of Korea proposed the establishment of a Centre for Research and Development entrusted with the task of attempting a possible harmonization of legal regimes applicable to economic activities in the Afro-Asian region to function under the auspices of the AALCC. The Government of the Republic of Korea requested the Secretary-General to initiate a feasibility study for the establishment of the proposed Centre and placed a sum of US \$ 25,000 at the disposal of the AALCC for that purpose.

Thereafter, a computerized Data Collection Unit was set up as an integral part of the AALCC Secretariat for an initial period of two years as from 1 February 1992 to serve as a storehouse of information on the economic laws and regulations of the Member States. Operational expenses

of the Unit were met from the grant extended by the Government of the Republic of Korea.

A Working Group was constituted consisting of the Liaison officers of Egypt, Malaysia, the Philippines, Republic of Korea and India to oversee and advise on the technical aspects of the operations of the Unit in April 1992, pursuant to the decision of the Heads of Delegations taken at the Islamabad Session (February 1992) that the operations of the Unit should be overseen by the Liaison officers. Mr. Asghar Dastmalchi, Assistant Secretary-General, was designated as the official overall incharge of the Unit.

The Secretariat approached certain regional and international institutions which had indicated their willingness to provide to the Unit materials available with them and to cooperate with the Unit through conclusion of mutual co-operation agreements. These institutions included the United Nations Secretariat, UNCTAD, UNCITRAL, UNCTC (which has now been reorganised as the Transnational Corporations and Management Division (TCMD) of the UN Department of Economic and Social Development, the regional Economic Commissions of the United Nations, (in particular ESCAP, ECWA and ECA), the World Bank, the IMF, UNIDO, WIPO, UNIDROIT, the Hague Conference on Private International Law, the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Preferential Trade Area of the Southern and Eastern African States. Most of these institutions have forwarded valuable materials to the Secretariat.

As for conclusion of cooperation arrangements, the AALCC has already concluded such arrangements with the OAU, UNIDO and the Commonwealth Secretariat. IMF has expressed an interest in concluding a cooperation agreement once the Unit becomes fully operational.

At the Tokyo Session (January 1994) the Committee expressed its satisfaction at the progress made by the Unit and decided to absorb the Unit in the AALCC Secretariat, its operational expenses being met from the regular budget of the AALCC. The AALCC, once again, urged the Member States to cooperate with the Unit by promptly furnishing the information and materials sought by it in English language which is the official language of the AALCC including copies of bilateral or multilateral agreements concluded, ratified or acceded to by them in the field of international trade and economic relations as well as national legislations enacting such agreements. The Committee also directed the Secretariat to take active measures to publicise the existence of the Unit so that the services available in the Unit could come to the knowledge of the private companies in the Member States.

Methodology adopted in indexing the available information/documentation and formulation of the initial database.

The information/documentation received from the Governments in the Afro-Asian region and collaborating institutions as well as those which were available in the AALCC Secretariat have been arranged under the following Classification:

Legal Framework for International Trade

- A. *Standard/Model Contracts for use in International Trade.*
- B. *Legal Guides, Guidelines and Model Laws.*
- C. *Legal Framework for Foreign Investment in Asia-Africa*
 - I. Multilateral Instruments;
 - II. Bilateral Treaties for Promotion and Protection of Investments.
 - III. Investment Codes and Legislation.
 - IV. Legislation for export processing zones, free zones and special economic zones.
- D. *Trade Expansion, Economic Cooperation and Integration:*
 - I. Multilateral instruments concerning trade expansion, economic cooperation and integration in Asia and Africa.
 - II. Bilateral Agreements concluded by Asian and African Countries.
- E. *Intellectual Property Rights*
 - I. International and Regional Conventions;
 - II. National legislation regulating inventions, industrial designs, trademarks and other industrial property rights.
- F. *Exchange Control Arrangements and Exchange Restrictions.*
- G. *Countertrade:*
 - I. Legal Guides
 - II. Bilateral Countertrade agreements concluded by Asian and African Countries.
- H. *Arbitration*
 - I. International Legislative Instruments;

- II. National Laws and
- III. Arbitration Rules.

I. International Conventions in the field of International Trade and Transport.

The abovementioned scheme of classification is intended to be revised and expanded in the light of the further information that may be received from the Governments in the Afro-Asian region and collaborating institutions. As already mentioned, the Unit has already completed the task of indexing the documentation received and gathered indicating the source of the information, but this is an ongoing work. However, the present focus has been on the establishment of a database on Legal Framework on Foreign Investment in Asia and Africa.

M. AALCC Headquarters Agreement signed with the Government of the State of Qatar on 22nd April 1995 at Doha, Qatar

In pursuance of the Decision of the Kampala Session (1993), an Agreement concerning the relocation of AALCC Headquarters was signed between the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee and the Government of the State of Qatar on the 22nd April 1995, at Doha.

The Agreement was signed on behalf of the AALCC by the Secretary-General, Mr. Tang Chengyuan and for the Government of the State of Qatar by Sheikh Jassim Bin Nasser Al Thani, Director of the Legal Affairs Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Government of the State of Qatar.

The text of the Agreement is as follows:

Headquarters Agreement between the Government of the State of Qatar and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee

Whereas the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee (referred to hereinafter as "the Committee") decided at its thirty-second session held in Kampala from 1st to 6th February 1993 to accept the offer of the Government of the State of Qatar (referred to hereinafter as "the Government") to host the Headquarters of the Committee at Doha;

Whereas Article 6 of the Revised Statutes of the Committee provides for the conclusion of the Headquarters Agreement and the establishment of the Permanent Secretariat at the Headquarters of the Committee;

Desiring to conclude an agreement to establish the Permanent Headquarters of the Committee (referred to hereinafter as "the Secretariat") at Doha and to regulate matters arising as a result thereof;

The Government and the Committee hereby agree as follows:

Article 1 **Use of Terms**

For the purpose of this Agreement:

- (a) "the Committee" means the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee;
- (b) "the Secretariat" means the Secretariat of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee;
- (c) "the Secretary-General" means the Secretary-General of the Committee.

Article 2 **Juridical Personality**

The Committee shall possess juridical personality and shall have the capacity to contract, acquire and dispose of immovable and movable property and to institute legal proceedings in its name.

Article 3 **Seat of the Committee**

The Committee shall have its permanent Headquarters at Doha.

Article 4 **Premises of the Secretariat**

The Government shall provide suitable land to build the premises of the Secretariat and other facilities at no cost to the Committee.

The Government shall also arrange with a local bank the necessary loan without interest for the purpose of building the premises of the Secretariat and other facilities.

Article 5 **Property, Funds and Assets**

(1) The Committee, its property and assets in the territory of the State of Qatar, shall enjoy immunity from every form of legal process,

except in so far as in any particular case the Committee has expressly waived its immunity. It is, however, understood that no waiver of immunity shall extend to any measure of execution.

(2) The premises of the Committee, its property and assets as well as its archives in the territory of the State of Qatar and in general all documents belonging to it wherever located and by whomsoever held shall be inviolable and be immune from search, requisition, confiscation and expropriation.

(3) The Committee may hold funds or currency of any kind and operate accounts in any currency. It shall be free to transfer its funds or currency from the State of Qatar to another country or to convert any currency held by it into any other currency.

(4) The Committee, its assets, income and other property whether owned or occupied shall be:

- (a) exempt from all direct taxes. It is understood, however, that the Committee shall not claim exemption from taxes which are, in fact, no more than charges for public utility services;
- (b) exempt from customs duties and prohibitions and restrictions on imports and exports in respect of articles imported or exported by the Committee for its official use. It is understood, however, that articles imported under such exemption shall not be sold in the State of Qatar except under conditions agreed with the Government;
- (c) exempt from customs duties and prohibitions and restrictions in imports and exports in respect of its publications.

Article 6 **Public Services and Utilities**

The Government shall assist the Committee in obtaining for its premises, the necessary public services and utilities.

Article 7 **Flag and Emblem**

The Committee shall be entitled to display its flag and emblem on its premises. The Secretary-General shall be entitled to display the Committee's flag on the vehicles used by him.

Article 8

Facilities in Respect of Communications

(1) The Committee and its Secretariat shall enjoy in the territory of the State of Qatar freedom of communication and no censorship shall be applied to the official correspondence of the Committee certified as such and bearing the official seal of the Committee.

(2) The Committee shall, subject to the approval of the Government, have the right to use codes and to dispatch and receive its official correspondence by courier or in bags, which shall have the same immunities and privileges as couriers and bags of the specialized agencies of the United Nations.

Article 9

Privileges and Immunities of the Secretariat Staff

(1) International category officials of the Secretariat shall:

- (a) be immune from legal process in respect of words spoken or written and all acts performed by them in their official capacity;
- (b) be exempt from taxation on the salaries and emoluments paid to them by the Committee on the same conditions as are enjoyed by diplomatic envoys of comparable ranks;
- (c) be immune from national service obligations;
- (d) be immune, together with their spouses and children, from immigration restrictions and aliens registration;
- (e) be accorded the same privileges in respect of exchange facilities as are accorded to officials of comparable rank of diplomatic missions;
- (f) be given, together with their spouses and children, the same repatriation facilities in time of international crises as officials of comparable rank of diplomatic missions;
- (g) have the right on their first arrival to import free of customs duties, taxes and other levies, furniture, other personal and household effects to establish residence in Qatar, and the right to export with similar privileges goods thus imported at the termination of their duties with the Secretariat.

(2) The Secretary-General shall hold the rank and status of Ambassador. In addition to the privileges and immunities specified in paragraph 1 (a)

to (g) of this article, he shall be accorded in respect of himself, his spouse and children such other privileges and immunities as are accorded to the heads of diplomatic missions accredited to the Government.

(3) International category officials on secondment from the Participating States shall enjoy privileges and immunities commensurate with their rank through their respective diplomatic missions accredited to the Government.

(4) International category officials other than those mentioned in paragraphs (2) and (3) shall enjoy such privileges and immunities comparable to those granted to diplomatic envoys of comparable rank in the State of Qatar.

(5) Officials who are nationals of, or permanent residents in the State of Qatar shall be immune from legal process in respect of words spoken or written by them in their official capacity.

(6) The Secretary-General shall communicate the names of the Secretariat staff included in the aforesaid categories to the Government in accordance with the Statutory Rules of the Committee.

Article 10

Privileges and Immunities of the Participating States, Associate Participating States and Observers

(1) Representatives of the Participating and Associate Participating States, including Members, Alternate Members and experts (as referred to in Article 2 of the Statutes of the Committee) as well as observers from non-participating States and International Organizations shall, during their stay in the State of Qatar for the purposes of attending sessions, other meetings and consultations of the Committee, enjoy the following:

- (a) Immunity from personal arrest or detention and from seizure of their personal baggage and immunity from legal process in respect of words spoken or written and all acts done by them in their official capacity;
- (b) Inviolability of all official papers and documents;
- (c) The right to receive papers or correspondence in sealed covers;
- (d) Exemption in respect of themselves and their spouses from immigration restrictions, aliens registration or national service obligations;

- (e) The same facilities in respect of currency or exchange restrictions as are accorded to temporary official missions;
- (f) The same immunities and privileges in respect of their personal baggage as are accorded to diplomatic envoys;
- (g) Such other privileges and immunities and facilities not inconsistent with the foregoing as the diplomatic envoys enjoy, except that they shall have no right to claim exemption from customs duties on goods imported (otherwise than as part of their personal baggage) or from excise duties or sales-taxes.

Provided always that the immunities specified in the foregoing clauses can be waived in any individual case in regard to a Member, Alternate Member, expert or observer by the government of the respective Participating or Associate Participating State or by the Government of the Observer or the concerned international organization.

(2) The competent authorities in the Government shall take all necessary measures to facilitate the entry into and sojourn in the territory of Qatar and shall place no impediment in the way of departure from the host country of the persons referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article.

(3) Visas which may be required by persons referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be arranged and granted without charge as promptly as possible.

(4) It is understood that persons referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall not be exempt from the application of the internationally accepted rules governing quarantine and public health.

Article 11

Purpose of Privileges and Immunities

Privileges and immunities accorded in this Agreement are in the interests of the Committee and not for the personal benefit of the individuals themselves.

Article 12

Waiver of Privileges and Immunities

The Committee has the duty to waive immunity in any case where the immunity would impede the course of justice and can be waived without prejudice to the purpose for which the immunity is accorded.

Article 13

Cooperation between the Committee and the Government to Facilitate the Administration of Justice

(1) The Committee shall cooperate at all times with the appropriate authorities of the Government to facilitate the proper administration of justice, secure the observance of local laws and regulations and prevent any abuse of the privileges, immunities and facilities granted under this Agreement.

(2) If the Government considers that there has been abuse of any privilege or immunity conferred by this Agreement, consultations shall be held between the Government and the Committee to determine whether any such abuse has occurred and if so, the Committee shall take necessary measures to remedy the situation and to ensure that no repetition occurs.

Article 14

Identity Cards

The Secretariat staff shall be provided by the Government with a special identity card certifying the fact that they are officers or staff members of the Committee, enjoying the privileges and immunities specified in this Agreement.

Article 15

Interpretation

This Agreement shall be interpreted in the light of its primary objective and sole purpose of only enabling the Committee at its Headquarters at Doha to fully and efficiently discharge its responsibilities and fulfill its purposes and functions.

Article 16

Settlement of Disputes

(1) The Committee shall, by agreement with the Government, make provision for appropriate modes of settlement of :

- (a) disputes arising out of contracts or other disputes of a private law character to which the Committee is a party;
- (b) disputes involving any official of the Committee, who by reason of his official position enjoys immunity, if immunity has not been waived by the Committee.

(2) All differences arising out of the interpretation or application of the present Agreement shall be settled by mutual consultations between the parties unless in any case it is agreed by the parties to have recourse to another mode.

Article 17

Supplementary Agreements

The Government and the Committee may enter into such supplementary agreement (s) as may be necessary to fulfill the purposes of this Agreement.

Article 18

Entry Into Force

(1) This Agreement shall enter into force on signature.

(2) This Agreement may be terminated by agreement between the Government and the Committee.

In witness whereof the respective representatives of the Government and the Committee have signed this Agreement.

Done in duplicate at Doha this day Saturday 22nd of April 1995 in English and Arabic languages. In case of doubt the English text shall prevail.

(ii) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee

The General Assembly, by its resolution 35/2 of 13 October 1980, invited the Asian African Legal Consultative Committee (AALCC) to participate in its sessions and its work in the capacity of observer. A Permanent Observer Mission to the United Nations was thereafter established in New York. On the occasion of the commemoration of the Committee's twenty-fifth anniversary the Assembly, in its resolution 36/38 of 18 November 1981, requested the Secretary-General of the United Nations to carry out consultations with the Secretary-General of AALCC with a view to strengthening further and widening the scope of cooperation between the two organizations. In its resolution 39/47 of 10 December 1984, the Assembly commended AALCC for orienting its programme to strengthening its supportive role to the work of the United Nations in wider areas. The item had been considered by the Assembly annually until its forty-first session and then at its forty-third, forty-fifth and forty-seventh sessions.

In its resolution 47/6, the General-Assembly, inter alia, noted with satisfaction the continuing efforts of AALCC towards strengthening the role of the United Nations and its various organs, including the International Court of Justice, through programmes and initiatives undertaken by the Committee; the commendable progress achieved towards enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and AALCC in wider areas; and the decision of AALCC to participate actively in the programmes of the United Nations Decade of International Law. The Assembly decided to include the item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee" in the provisional agenda of its forty-ninth session.

Consultations on Matters of Common Interest

Pursuant to the cooperation framework agreed upon by the two organizations, consultations have routinely been held on matters of common interest, in particular, regarding representation at meetings and sessions, exchange of documentation and information, and the identification of areas where the supportive role of AALCC might be most productive. During the period under review, meetings were held between the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary-General of AALCC. Pursuant to those consultations, AALCC has tried to orient its work programmes to accord priority to matters that are of current interest to the United Nations and to initiate actions with a view to strengthening the role of the United Nations. The areas of cooperation now cover matters in the economic and humanitarian fields as well as in the field of international law.

Representation at Meetings and Conferences

During the period under review, AALCC was represented at various meetings and conferences held under the auspices of the United Nations and its organs and agencies, including the regular sessions of the General Assembly, the International Law Commission, the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), the Preparatory Commission for the International Seabed Authority and for the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, the informal consultations on the Law of the Sea, the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference on Human Rights, the United Nations Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, the Inter-governmental Negotiating Committee for the elaboration of an international convention to combat desertification in those countries experiencing serious drought and/or