

PREFACE

At the time of its establishment in 1956, AALCO had seven Members and was intended to be a non-permanent Committee for a term of five years. Its five-year term was extended on four occasions until the Organization which it had developed into was made permanent in 1981. The membership of AALCO has grown to include 47 States from Asia and Africa. It now occupies an important position in the international legal community, both as an advisory body to its Member States and as an essential mechanism for Inter-Regional co-operation and the exchange of information and views on matters with an international legal dimension. As the most important regional intergovernmental organization, AALCO ensures that the voice of Asia and Africa is heard in various foras and settings where international law making takes place. The contribution of AALCO in the progressive development and codification of international law is well documented. The current work programme of AALCO incorporates important legal issues and closely tracks the items on the agendas of the International Law Commission and the Sixth Committee of the UN General Assembly.

In consistence with the rich tradition of international law perspective found in the Asian and African region, the Annual Sessions of the Organization provide an appropriate forum for its Member States to deliberate and discuss some of the most pressing problems of contemporary international life from the viewpoint of Asian - African States. The Forty-Seventh (HEADQUARTERS) Session of AALCO which was held from 30th June to 4th July 2008 in the historic city of New Delhi was a phenomenal success. In terms of participation thirty nine Member States, representatives from three Regional Arbitration Centres of AALCO, Observers from five Non-member States and representatives from eight Intergovernmental/Specialized Agencies/Subsidiary Organs/Inter-Regional Organizations attended and contributed to the deliberations of AALCO. The Session also elected His Excellency Ambassador Prof. Dr. Rahmat Mohamad from Malaysia as the new Secretary General of AALCO for a tenure of four years by way of consensus.

As has been customary, a One-Day Special Meeting on “Contemporary Issues in International Humanitarian Law” was held with the active collaboration of ICRC during the Session. The topic was divided into three themes viz, Cluster Munitions, Landmine Treaty and the issue of Private Military Companies, so as to ensure extensive and well informed discussions. The presentations made by the internationally acclaimed experts ensured that the deliberations were of high order. In this regard, I would like to emphasise the importance of the Cooperation Agreements that AALCO has entered into with a number of International Organisations, which provide the catalyst to hold Special Meetings during the Sessions and at the same time increases the international visibility of AALCO.

Complying with the policy of rationalization of the agenda, nine items (including the special day meeting) were extensively deliberated. In tune with the established practice, the Secretariat prepared briefs on all the fifteen items on the agenda.. This comprehensive Report presents to the Member States the discussions and deliberations on

those items in detail. On the concluding day of the Session, the Member States adopted the Summary Report, Resolutions on Organizational and Substantive Matters, including a resolution on the Special Day Meeting along with the Message of Thanks on behalf of all the Member States to the President of the Republic of India. It gives me immense satisfaction to state that the Drafting Committee members left no stone unturned in scrutinizing all the above mentioned documents.

Besides the above mentioned documents, the officials of the Secretariat also prepared the Provisional Summary Records of the Inaugural Session, First and Second Meetings of Delegations of Member States as well as Five General Meetings which were distributed to all delegations. The Member States were requested to review the documents and send their opinions/suggestions/comments to the Secretariat within a period of six weeks.

This Report of the Forty-Seventh Session contains mainly the text of statements of the Inaugural Session, three Meetings of Delegations of Member States and six General meetings; the Resolutions adopted at the Session; the Summary Report and the list of participants who attended the Session.

For the brilliant success of the Session, I wish to thank the Government of India for their excellent cooperation and administrative arrangements which were very helpful in conducting the proceedings of the Session smoothly and successfully. I would also like to express my heartfelt appreciation and thanks to my friends and colleagues Dr. Xu Jie and Amb. S. R. Tabatabaei, the Deputy Secretaries-General, for their unstinted and wholehearted support in making the Session a huge success.

I also wish to express my deep appreciation to the Assistant Principal Legal Officer, Mrs. Anuradha Bakshi; Senior Legal Officers, Mr. Shikhar Ranjan, Mr. Rajesh Babu, and Mr. Mohammed Hussain; and Legal Officers, Mr. Leeladhar Bhandary, Mr. Senthil Kumar, Ms. Shannu Narayan and Mr. Pandiaraj along with the other Staffs of the Secretariat for their immense efforts exerted to help me in accomplishing my mandate. Their professionalism and sense of responsibility contributed a lot towards making the Session a success and in bringing out all the documents referred to above on time.

16 December 2008

Prof. Dr. Rahmat Mohamad
Secretary-General