

SUMMARY REPORT



AALCO
Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization
Sixtieth Annual Session
26 to 28 September 2022
New Delhi (Headquarters), Republic of India

SUMMARY REPORT OF THE SIXTIETH ANNUAL SESSION OF THE ASIAN-AFRICAN LEGAL CONSULTATIVE ORGANIZATION

1. Introduction

- 1.1. 41 Member States of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO) participated in the Sixtieth Annual Session (hereinafter “the Session”) namely, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Kingdom of Bahrain, Brunei Darussalam, the Republic of Cameroon, the Republic of Cyprus, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the Federal Republic of Somalia, the Republic of Ghana, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Republic of India, the Republic of Indonesia, the Republic of Iraq, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Japan, the Republic of Kenya, the Republic of Korea, the State of Kuwait, the State of Libya, Malaysia, the Republic of Mauritius, Mongolia, Nepal, the State of Palestine, the People’s Republic of China, the Republic of the Philippines, the State of Qatar, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Republic of Senegal, the Republic of Singapore, the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, the Republic of South Africa, the Republic of the Sudan, the Sultanate of Oman, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Kingdom of Thailand, the Republic of Türkiye, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the United Republic of Tanzania, and the Republic of Yemen.**
- 1.2. Representatives of the following Regional Arbitration Centres of AALCO were also present: the Asian International Arbitration Centre (formerly Kuala Lumpur Regional Centre for Arbitration) and the AALCO Hong Kong Regional Arbitration Centre (HKRAC).**
- 1.3. In accordance with Rule 18 (1) of the Statutory Rules, the following Observers were admitted to the Session:**
- I. Representatives from the following Non-Member States: the Republic of Eritrea, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, the Republic of Madagascar, the Republic of**

Mali, the Kingdom of Morocco, the Republic of Namibia, the Republic of Rwanda, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Zambia and the Republic of Zimbabwe.

- II. Representatives from the following International Organizations: the **Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH)**, the **International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT)** and the **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)**.

2. Inaugural Session

2.1. The Sixtieth Annual Session of AALCO commenced on 26 September 2022.

2.2. H.E. Dr. Kamalinne Pinitpuvadol, Secretary-General of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO) welcomed all delegations to the Annual Session expressing gratitude for their continued participation and support to the Organization. He placed on record his immense appreciation of the Legal & Treaties Division, Ministry of External Affairs, **Republic of India** for their help and support in the organization of the Session. It was also recalled that the Republic of India as a host nation for the Headquarters of the Organization has always been a pillar of strength and support to the Organization. Before concluding, he congratulated the Member States for their enthusiastic participation, as this Session was the first Annual Session organized in his tenure.

2.3. H.E. Ms. Jia Ma, Minister, Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Republic of India on behalf of the President of the Fifty-Ninth Annual Session of AALCO, welcomed all delegates to the Sixtieth Annual Session of AALCO. Highlighting the achievements of AALCO, she emphasized the key role played by the People's Republic of China in supporting the activities of AALCO. She recalled the substantive activities of the Organization during the presidency of the People's Republic of China and appreciated their close working relationship with AALCO. She reiterated the commitment of the **People's Republic of China** to cooperate with all Member States to further enhance the work of the Organization.

2.4. H.E. Smt. Meenakshi Lekhi, Minister of State for External Affairs and Culture, Republic of India, the Chief Guest, in her inaugural address extended a warm welcome to the delegates to the historic city of New Delhi. The Chief Guest highlighted that India was not only a founding member, but also hosts the Headquarters of AALCO, which goes to showcase India's commitment to law making and rule of law both domestically and internationally. She stated that aspirations of developing countries means to take care of our own people while engaging with the world and making the world a better place to live for everyone. She highlighted the Spirit of Bandung as the guiding principle for all of us to engage and work together. The same spirit can also be enshrined in the words of Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, '*Sab ka Saath, Sab ka Vikas aur Sab ka Vishwas.*' This governance model, coupled with a growing economy and vibrant democracy, has helped India in meeting the contemporary international and domestic challenges and aspire for a better future. On behalf of the Republic of India, it was stated that true to its ancient and rich tradition of development and respect for international law, it would continue to support AALCO in the fulfillment of its mandate. She cited provisions of the Constitution to highlight India's commitment to international law. She also expressed her deep sense of appreciation to the **Secretary-**

General and the Member States for their dedication in carrying forward the mission of the Organization..

- 2.5. H.E. Hon. Geophrey Mizengo Pinda, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Constitutional and Legal Affairs, the United Republic of Tanzania** delivered the vote of thanks **on behalf of the President of the Fifty-Eighth Annual Session**. Emphasizing the rise of AALCO from a small seven-member group to a forty-seven Member Organization today, he acknowledged the significant role performed by the Secretary-General, H.E. Dr. Kamalinne Pinitpuvadol in revitalizing the agenda of AALCO. Urging all Member States to support AALCO in all ways possible, the address concluded by encouraging all delegations to actively participate in the proceedings of the Annual Session.

3. First Meeting of the Delegations of AALCO Member States

- 3.1. H.E. Ms. Jia Ma, Minister, Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Republic of India on behalf of the President of Fifty-Ninth Annual Session**, called the Meeting to order.

- 3.2. The Republic of Mauritius** withdrew the agenda item “Violation by the United Kingdom, through its continued unlawful administration of the Chagos Archipelago, of the right of the Republic of Mauritius under international law to territorial integrity and sovereignty over its territory as a whole, including the Chagos Archipelago” that had been proposed.

- 3.3.** The following agenda was unanimously adopted.

3.4. Agenda

I. Organizational Matters

1. Consideration and Adoption of the Agenda and Tentative Schedule of Meetings and Events.
2. Election of the President and the Vice-President.
3. Admission of New Members.
4. Admission of Observers.
5. Opening Statement of the President of AALCO.
6. Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of AALCO.
7. Release of AALCO Publications.
8. Presentation of Draft Budget for 2023.
9. Report on the Work of the AALCO's Regional Arbitration Centres.
10. Venue of the next Sixty-First Annual Session.

II. Substantive Matters

1. Selected Items on the Agenda of the International Law Commission.
2. Environment and Sustainable Development.
3. The Status and Treatment of Refugees.
4. Violations of International Law in Palestine and Other Occupied Territories by Israel and Other International Legal Issues related to the Question of Palestine.
5. International Trade and Investment Law.

- 3.5. **Admission of New Members:** No new Member was admitted to the Organization.
- 3.6. **Admission of Observers:** The **Republic of Eritrea**, the **Lao People's Democratic Republic**, the **Republic of Madagascar**, the **Republic of Mali**, the **Kingdom of Morocco**, the **Republic of Namibia**, the **Republic of Rwanda**, the **Russian Federation**, the **Republic of Zambia**, the **Republic of Zimbabwe**, the **Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH)**, the **International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT)** and the **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)** were admitted as Observers to the Sixtieth Annual Session.
- 3.7. **H.E. Ms. Jia Ma, Minister, Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Republic of India on behalf of the President of Fifty-Ninth Annual Session** invited the Member States to propose candidates for the posts of the **President** and the **Vice-President** of the Sixtieth Annual Session of AALCO. The Head of Delegation of the **United Republic of Tanzania** proposed the nomination of **H.E. Ms. Uma Sekhar, Additional Secretary, Legal & Treaties Division, Ministry of External Affairs, Republic of India** as the **President** of the Sixtieth Annual Session of AALCO. The proposal was seconded by the Head of Delegation of **Malaysia** and the Head of Delegation of the **Kingdom of Thailand** and thereafter the President was unanimously elected. The Head of Delegation of **Mongolia** proposed the nomination of **H.E. Mr. Mohammed Said Al Hilo, Minister of Justice, the Republic of the Sudan** as **Vice-President** of the Sixtieth Annual Session. The proposal was seconded by the Head of Delegation of the **Republic of Yemen** and the Head of Delegation of the **Federal Republic of Nigeria** and thereafter the **Vice-President** was unanimously elected. Thereafter, **H.E. Ms. Jia Ma, Minister, Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Republic of India on behalf of the President of Fifty-Ninth Annual Session** invited the **President** and the **Vice-President** of the Sixtieth Annual Session to assume their positions on the dais.
- 3.8. The newly elected **President, H.E. Ms. Uma Sekhar, Additional Secretary, Legal & Treaties Division, Ministry of External Affairs, Republic of India**, in her opening statement, warmly welcomed all delegations, including virtual participants, to the Sixtieth Annual Session on behalf of the Republic of India. She commended the work of the Secretariat for the preparation of succinct reports on the topics on the agenda under the leadership of the Secretary-General. She requested the Member States to restrict their general statements to the time allotted.

4. **First General Meeting**

- 4.1. **Release of AALCO Publication:** The following AALCO publications were released: Yearbook of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (Vol. XVIII, 2020-21), AALCO Journal of International Law (Vol. 10, 2021), Report of the AALCO Webinar on Rising Sea Levels and AALCO Member States: Perils and Protection under International Law (2022) and the Newsletter vol. 13.

Second Meeting of the Delegations of the AALCO Member States

Agenda Item: Report of the Secretary-General

- 4.2. **H.E. Dr. Kamalinne Pinitpuvadol, Secretary-General of AALCO** expressed his gratitude to the Member States for their unwavering support and participation in activities of the Organization. The Secretary-General expressed his gratitude to **H.E. Ms. Teresa Cheng, the then Secretary for Justice of Hong Kong SAR of the People's Republic of China, and President of the Fifty-Ninth Annual Session of AALCO** for her able leadership of the Organization during her Presidency. The Secretary-General also thanked **H.E. Dr. Gaston Kenfack Douajni, Director of Legislation, the Republic of Cameroon and the Vice-President of the Fifty-Ninth Annual Session** for his services to AALCO. Thereafter, he provided a brief outline of the work undertaken by the Secretariat as well as financial and administrative matters of the Organization. In order to make the Organization more robust, it was proposed to set up two sub-committees to facilitate the discussions on “the scale of assessed contributions of the Member States” as well as “the streamlining of the Statutory Rules” of the Organization. Several delegations expressed their general support to the Secretary-General's proposals.

Agenda Item: Discussions on the Budget for 2023

- 4.3. **Mr. Jun Yamada, Deputy Secretary-General of AALCO**, highlighted the details of the budget approved by the Liaison Officers for the year 2023. An amount to the tune of 676,800 US dollars taking into consideration the expenses likely to be incurred in 2023. He alluded to the continuous efforts of the Organization to employ the human and material resources available with it and to minimize operational costs. He also made a brief presentation of the issue of arrears and the recent discussions held by the Liaison Officers on the scale of contributions. One delegation requested clarification on the figures of the budget in the report which was orally addressed by the Deputy Secretary-General. Another delegation expressed its hope to review the scale of assessed contributions at the sub-committee.

5. Second General Meeting

- 5.1. At the Sixtieth Annual Session of AALCO the following delegations delivered general statements: the **Republic of the Sudan, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Kingdom of Thailand, the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, Japan, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the State of Libya, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia, the Republic of Indonesia, the State of Qatar, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Nepal, the Republic of Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Cameroon, the United Republic of Tanzania, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of India, the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Republic of Kenya, and the Republic of Ghana**. The Observer delegation of the **International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT)** delivered a general statement.
- 5.2. All delegations congratulated the President and the Vice-President on assuming their posts, and expressed confidence that the Annual Session would be conducted successfully under their leadership. They congratulated the AALCO Secretariat and the

Government of the **Republic of India** for the preparations undertaken for the Sixtieth Annual Session further commending the Secretary-General for the work done and completed by him and initiatives undertaken to expand the work programme of AALCO in the first year of his tenure. A number of Member States recalled the difficulties faced during the COVID-19 pandemic and assured all cooperation to address public health emergencies and share its experience in this regard. The need to embrace digitalization was also underscored by certain States as was the need for the Secretariat to increase the strength of its human resources.

- 5.3. Several States addressed issues of common concern on the work programme of AALCO including but not limited to International Trade and Investment Law, Status and Treatment of Refugees, Environment and Sustainable Development and Violations of International Law in Palestine and Other Occupied Territories by Israel and Other International Legal Issues related to the Question of Palestine. In general, the Member States expressed the need to strengthen multilateral mechanisms to address global issues such as international terrorism, Climate Change, Marine Biodiversity in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction and furthering international economic cooperation and adherence to the rule of law. Several Member States expressed the need to implement the principles and purposes of the UN Charter and raising the voice of Asian and African Member States at the UN.

SUBSTANTIVE AGENDA ITEMS FOR DELIBERATION

6. Third General Meeting

Agenda Item: Violations of International Law in Palestine and Other Occupied Territories by Israel and Other International Legal Issues related to the Question of Palestine

- 6.1. **Dr. Ali Garshasbi, Deputy Secretary-General of AALCO**, in his introductory statement highlighted AALCO's historical engagement with the subject over the years. While referring to the brief prepared on the topic, it was stated that concerns in the Occupied Palestinian Territories regarding the expansion of settlement and settler violence, violation of International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law, a complete lack of accountability for crimes including grave violations of the Geneva Conventions as well as an application of a policy of apartheid by the Occupying power were some of the issues of contemporary importance for Member States.
- 6.2. The delegations of the **State of Palestine**, the **Syrian Arab Republic**, **Malaysia**, the **Republic of Indonesia**, the **Republic of India** and the **Islamic Republic of Iran**, the **Federal Republic of Somalia**, the **People's Republic of China** and the **Islamic Republic of Pakistan** delivered statements on the agenda item.
- 6.3. Several Member States expressed their solidarity with the **State of Palestine** and supported the just cause of the Palestinian people in their struggle for the right to self-determination, statehood and realization of human rights. Many delegations reiterated their call for the implementation of the Two-State solution and a viable sovereign State of Palestine having borders the same as those established in 1967 and East Jerusalem as its capital. Several delegations appealed for the immediate cessation of Israel's blatant violation of its international obligations, especially those under numerous UN Security

Council resolutions, the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and relevant human rights instruments. All delegations called for the end of the occupation and illegal activities carried out in the Occupied Palestinian Territory including the expansion of settlements, transfer of population and implementation of a policy of apartheid. Further some delegations also underlined that the Israeli occupation of the Syrian Arab Golan is a blatant violation of international law and in particular United Nations Security Council Resolution No. 497 of 1981, which underlines that the Israeli decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration in the occupied Syrian Golan is null and void and without international legal effect.

Agenda Item: Select Items on the Agenda of the International Law Commission

- 6.4. Dr. Ali Garshasbi, Deputy Secretary-General of AALCO**, gave a brief account of the six topics that had been deliberated at the seventy-third session of the Commission: (1) Peremptory norms of general international law (*jus cogens*) (2) Protection of the Environment in relation to armed conflicts; (3) Immunity of State Officials from foreign criminal jurisdiction; (4) Succession of States in respect of State Responsibility; (5) General principles of law; and (6) Sea-level Rise in relation to International Law. **Prof. Dire Tladi, Amb. Marcelo Vázquez Bermúdez, Amb. Nguyễn Hồng Thao, Prof. Dr. Bimal N. Patel** delivered their statements on the topics on the agenda of the International Law Commission. **Prof. Dire Tladi** in his presentation underlined the importance for Asian and African States to submit detailed written statements to the Commission in order to inform it about their State practice. The presentation thereafter focused on the draft provisions on ‘Peremptory norms of general international law (*jus cogens*)’ which had been adopted by the Commission at the second reading. In particular, two draft provisions (draft conclusion 2 and 16) concerning *jus cogens* norms reflecting the fundamental values of the international community and the effect of *jus cogens* norms on security council resolutions were discussed.
- 6.5. Amb. Marcelo Vázquez Bermúdez** in his presentation focused on the general principles of law for which he is the special rapporteur. He explained the objectives behind the eleven draft conclusions, and provided an overview of their content.
- 6.6. Amb. Nguyễn Hồng Thao** delivered a statement on the relationship between the Commission and AALCO. He informed the Member States about the proposal on epidemics and international law submitted to the Commission for its inclusion in the long term programme of the work of the Commission.
- 6.7. Prof. Dr. Bimal N. Patel** delivered a presentation on developments on the topics discussed at the seventy-third session of the Commission; views on strengthening relations between the Commission and the Sixth Committee of the UN General Assembly and ideas and suggestions which could enhance contribution of the Asian and African States to the work of the Commission in general. He informed the meeting of the key provisions and concepts elucidated in the final products on various topics on the agenda of the Commission. He also provided an update and review of the status of the topics, including the timelines for submission of inputs by States, international organizations and others on various topics.
- 6.8. The delegations of Malaysia, Japan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the United Republic of Tanzania, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Indonesia, the**

Republic of India, the People's Republic of China, and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam delivered statements on the agenda item.

- 6.9.** Several delegations expressed their gratitude to the Members of the Commission for their detailed and insightful presentations. They emphasized on the role of the Commission for the codification and progressive development of international law and appreciated the role of Special Rapporteurs on their respective topics and subjects of engagement. Several delegations gave detailed comments and their respective positions on the topics deliberated at the seventy-third session of the Commission. These topics included Peremptory norms of general international law (*jus cogens*), General Principles of Law, Immunity of State Officials from Foreign Criminal Jurisdiction, Sea level rise in relation to International Law, Protection of the Environment from Armed Conflict and Succession of States in Respect of State Responsibility. Some Member States expressed the need for the final products of the Commission to reflect State practice of the Member States in the process of codification. Delegations also made observations on the key provisions underscoring the need to engage more deeply with the Commission and further the engagement with the Commission in light of contemporary challenges. Some delegations expressed concern on some of the draft articles proposed by the Commission on the topic 'Immunity of State official from foreign criminal jurisdiction.' One delegation highlighted the necessity of exchange of views between the Commission and regional organizations.

Agenda Item: International Trade and Investment Law

- 6.10. H.E. Dr. Kamalinne Pinitpuvadol, Secretary-General of AALCO** provided a brief introduction of the topic, which has been on the agenda of the Organization as a combined topic since the Fifty-Seventh Annual Session (2018). It was stated that in view of the rapid developments taking place in this dynamic field the topics covered in the brief and open for deliberation assumed great contemporary relevance for the Asian and African regions in particular. Member States were encouraged to present their views on the topics providing their own experience in dealing with the pressing issues of the day and how effective cooperation between States could be strengthened to resolve them.
- 6.11. Dr. Aniruddha Rajput, Member, United Nations International Law Commission** delivered a presentation on the agenda item focusing on the issue of counter-claims in international investment arbitration. In his presentation, he drew the attention of the meeting to the provisions of the Convention on the Settlement of Investment Disputes between States and Nationals of Other States, 1965 dealing with counter-claims. In his presentation he emphasized that the question of counter-claims was a mixed question of substance and procedure and should have been addressed in the Working Group III of the UN Commission on International Trade Law. He recommended that the Member States should include wide provisions on counter-claims in their International Investment Agreements so as to deter any unmeritorious claims by investors.
- 6.12.** The delegations of **Malaysia, the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, the Republic of Kenya, Japan, the United Republic of Tanzania, the Republic of Indonesia, Nepal, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Republic of India, the Republic of Cameroon and the People's Republic of China** delivered statements on the agenda item. The observer

delegation of the **Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH)** also delivered a statement on the agenda item.

- 6.13.** On international trade law, several delegations expressed support for reviving the Appellate Body of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the need to strengthen the dispute settlement mechanism of the WTO. A number of delegations also underlined the need to implement precise and effective provisions on Special and Differential Treatment (SDT) in order to provide certain leeway to developing and least developed countries in implementing WTO obligations. Some delegations emphasized the centrality of the decisions arrived at the Twelfth Ministerial Conference for reviving the multilateral trading system. One delegation deplored that the aims and objectives of the WTO were jeopardized by unilateralism and new forms of protectionism.
- 6.14.** Several delegations delivered statements on the reform of the Investor-State Dispute Settlement Mechanism and commended the work of the Working Group III of the UN Commission on International Trade Law. The delegations were generally supportive of the recently adopted ‘Code of Conduct for Adjudicators’ and the ‘Draft Provisions of the Statute of the Standing Multilateral Mechanism for International Investment Disputes’ that addressed pressing issues such as ‘double-hatting’, impartiality and independence of adjudicators, confidentiality of proceedings and ‘forum shopping.’ Some delegations highlighted the need to regulate third-party funding while one delegation shared an insightful experience of a recently concluded arbitration award in this regard.

Agenda Item: The Status and Treatment of Refugees

- 6.15. Mr. Sun Guoshun, Deputy Secretary-General of AALCO,** in his introductory statement underscored the rationale of re-introducing the topic as an agenda item for the Sixtieth Annual Session after a brief hiatus. He noted that AALCO’s historical engagement with the topic, including AALCO’s Bangkok Principles demonstrated the Afro-Asian engagement with international refugee law. In light of contemporary developments like the United Nations Global Compact on Refugees adopted in 2018 it was considered worthwhile to revisit this topic. He hoped that discussions on the topic would aid States to structure their refugee response framework in a manner consistent with international legal obligations.
- 6.16. Ms. Ragini Trakroo Zutshi** on behalf of the **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)**, highlighted various refugee/ humanitarian crises in different parts of the world, noting the experiences of the international community in dealing with them. It was highlighted that forced displacement should be dealt with in a systematic manner and international cooperation is required to effectively deal with the issue.
- 6.17.** The delegations of the **Republic of Kenya, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, the People’s Republic of China, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Federal Republic of Somalia, the Republic of Indonesia, the State of Palestine, Japan, the Republic of India, the Republic of Iraq, the Republic of Korea and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan** delivered statements on the agenda item.
- 6.18.** The delegations, in their statements, stressed on the humanitarian nature of refugee protection. It was mentioned that the protection of refugees was a global concern. The

Member States highlighted their domestic measures taken with respect to refugee protection while affirming their commitment to the international legal framework pertaining to safeguarding the rights of refugees like the 1951 Refugee Convention and its Protocol, regional mechanisms for refugee protection, the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework and the Global Compact on Refugees. It was noted that the international legal regime of refugees was distinct and separate from the regime protecting migrants and confusing the two international legal frameworks should be avoided. The importance of the principles of *non-refoulement* and burden and responsibility sharing was noted by several Member States.

Agenda Item: Environment and Sustainable Development

- 6.19. Mr. Sun Guoshun, Deputy Secretary-General of AALCO**, in his introductory statement highlighted AALCO's historical engagement with the topic while noting that the thrust of the Sixtieth Annual Session would be on two specific topics, firstly, Transboundary Air Pollution with Specific Reference to Sand & Dust Storms (SDS) and Haze pollution and, secondly, Marine Biodiversity in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) given their contemporary relevance.
- 6.20.** The delegations of the **Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the Republic of Kenya, the Republic of Korea, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, the Republic of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Republic of India, the Federal Republic of Somalia, the People's Republic of China, Nepal and the Federal Republic of Nigeria** delivered statements on the agenda item.
- 6.21.** The delegations, in their statements, appreciated the brief prepared by the Secretariat on the topic while noting the importance and relevance of the two topics specially selected for deliberation for the Session, namely Transboundary Air Pollution with Specific Reference to Sand & Dust Storms (SDS) and Haze Pollution and Marine Biodiversity in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ). Member States highlighted the significance of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14 in the context of global environmental protection while commenting on the grave hazards posed by climate change on the protection and conservation of ocean resources. Member States appreciated global efforts currently underway to prepare an Internationally Legally Binding Instrument (ILBI) on the topic of BBNJ. A few States noted the importance of fairness and equity in the process of developing such an instrument keeping in view the economic aspirations of developing countries especially with reference to benefit sharing, capacity-building and technology transfer.

Third Meeting of the Delegations of the AALCO Member States

Agenda Item: Report on the Work of the Regional Arbitration Centres

- 6.22. Mr. Jun Yamada, Deputy Secretary-General of AALCO** delivered an introductory statement recalling the commendable work and success of the Regional Arbitration Centres, over the years. In his presentation he congratulated the Host Governments of the Regional Arbitration Centres for their support and cooperation and called upon all Member States to continue supporting their activities and work program. He congratulated the Centres for their ever-growing case-load, excellent performance of

their functions and for their promotion of alternate dispute resolution as mechanism for resolving international commercial disputes.

6.23. Datuk Dr. Prasad Sandosham Abraham presented the report of the **Asian International Arbitration Centre (AIAC)** at the Annual Session. In his presentation he apprised the meeting of the volume, nature, and subject-matter of the disputes as well as other crucial statistics such as information about the parties and arbitrators. He also provided an overview of the scale of activities undertaken by the AIAC that ranged from workshops and training seminars to organizing other capacity building programs. A comprehensive outline of the activities of the arbitration centre during the period of 2021-2022 was provided and estimates about their growth and future plans were also shared with the meeting.

6.24. Mr. Nicholas Chan, MH, JP presented the report of the **AALCO Hong Kong Regional Arbitration Centre**. He reported on the successful office opening in Hong Kong, highlighted ten unique advantages for parties to use the new centre, briefly demonstrated the new website and Online Dispute Resolution platform, promoted the new model arbitration rules, and outlined the activities of the centre, its administration structure, services, capacity building and promotional efforts and future plans.

7. Fourth General Meeting and Concluding Session

Adoption of Message of Thanks to the Host Government

7.1. H.E. Dr. Kamalinne Pinitpuvadol, Secretary-General of AALCO presented a message of thanks on behalf of the AALCO Member States to **H.E. Smt. Draupadi Murmu, the Honourable President of the Republic of India**.

Adoption of Resolutions

The following resolutions were adopted on 28 September 2022.

Organizational Matters

1. AALCO/RES/60/ORG 1
Report of the Secretary General on Organizational, Administrative and Financial Matters.
2. AALCO/RES/60/ORG 2
AALCO's Budget for the year 2023.
3. AALCO/RES/60/ORG 3
Report on AALCO's Regional Centres for Arbitration.

Adoption of Summary Report of the Session, and General Recommendations

7.2. The draft summary report of the Sixtieth Annual Session was placed for the consideration of Member States and thereafter provisionally adopted by the Member States. It was decided that comments if any would be received by the Secretariat on or before the 28 October 2022.

Vote of thanks

- 7.3. A vote of thanks on behalf of Asian Member States was proposed by the Head of Delegation of **Nepal**, a vote of thanks on behalf of the African Member States was delivered by the Head of Delegation of **the Republic of the Sudan** and a vote of thanks on behalf of the Observers was delivered by **Amb. Nguyễn Hồng Thao, Member, United Nations International Law Commission**.
- 7.4. **H.E. Ms. Uma Sekhar, Additional Secretary, Legal & Treaties Division, Ministry of External Affairs, the Republic of India**, the President of the Sixtieth Annual Session delivered the concluding remarks.

The Sixtieth Annual Session of AALCO was thereafter concluded.