



ASIAN-AFRICAN LEGAL CONSULTATIVE ORGANIZATION

General Assembly

Agenda Item 114(b):

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations

**Statement by
Mr. Narinder Singh
President of the 47th Annual Session
of the
Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization**

3 November 2008

Mr. President,

It is my privilege and honour on behalf of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO) and in my capacity as President of the Forty-Seventh Session of AALCO to address this august Assembly - the most representative and democratic forum of the world.

I extend my sincere congratulations to you, Mr. President, and to your colleagues in the Bureau, on your elections to those high offices. We are confident that the session that with your wisdom and experience, this Session would achieve fruitful results.

The Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization was one of the outcomes of the historic Bandung Conference that took place in 1955. It linked together states of the Asian-African region, sending a message to the world that whatever may be the differences in our political, economic or legal systems, we are inextricably linked together as an Asian-African identity. This message of Bandung has had a lasting appeal that for years has brought Asian-African countries together in various world fora.

AALCO has been promoting Asian-African cooperation on legal matters during the fifty-two years of its work. The Organization was founded by seven States and has grown over time to comprise forty-seven Member States and two Observers. We look forward to enlarging our membership even further so that we may become more representative and better promote the views and concerns of the Member States. I take

this opportunity to call upon other countries from the Asian-African region to consider becoming members of AALCO.

The 2005 World Summit Outcome acknowledged that many of today's threats recognize no national boundaries, are interlinked and must be tackled at the global, regional and national levels in accordance with the Charter and international law and that Regional and other organizations can play a key role in helping the United Nations face global challenges. Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations should seek to capitalize on the strengths of each organization and should be complementary.

Mr. President,

AALCO complements the work of the United Nations in the progressive development and codification of international law. As a dynamic body, it provides an opportunity to a large number of Asian and African countries to contribute actively to the strengthening of the rule of law in international relations. It has undertaken various studies on international legal issues of common concern to the two continents, and in cooperation with the United Nations, has played a significant role in harmonizing the positions of Asian and African countries in the legal area.

AALCO held its Forty-Sixth and Forty-Seventh Annual Sessions in Cape Town, South Africa in 2007 and New Delhi, India in 2008, respectively, and during the

biennium a number of items on our agenda complemented the work of the United Nations. At both these sessions we deliberated on the work of the International Law Commission, the Law of the Sea, the Status and Treatment of Refugees, Establishing Cooperation Against Trafficking in Women and Children, Human Rights, Terrorism, Environment, and the United Nations Convention Against Corruption. At Cape Town, we focused special attention on the ongoing Doha round of trade negotiations, as well as international cooperation in countering terrorism, while at the New Delhi session, contemporary issues in international humanitarian law was the topic for special consideration.

Mr. President,

At the Forty-Seventh Session of AALCO our agenda items gave rise to mandates that are pertinent to work of the United Nations. For example, the Secretariat has been asked to conduct a study to find durable solutions to refugee problems. On international terrorism, the Secretary-General is exploring the possibility of holding a workshop in cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to deal with legal aspects of countering terrorism. The Secretariat is considering the preparation of a model legislation to implement the United Nations Convention against Corruption of 2003, while the work on a model legislation against trafficking in persons, especially women and children, is well on its way to completion. The topic of climate change was a priority issue at our most recent session, and the Secretariat had been mandated to follow up on the on-going negotiations for an international agreement on stronger action on climate

change for the period beyond 2012, as laid down in the Bali Action Plan. In addition, on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the International Law Commission, AALCO is organizing in New Delhi a one day seminar on the “Work of the ILC” on 2nd December 2008. The wide range of topics on the agenda of AALCO clearly illustrates the capacity of the Organization to contribute positively to collective efforts aimed at tackling the new challenges facing the international community.

Mr. President,

In order to assist in the teaching, study, dissemination and wider appreciation of international law in the Asian-African region, AALCO has launched an annual Training Course on General International Law at its Headquarters in New Delhi. The first such programme will run this year from 3 to 14 November. We hope to strengthen this programme further with the support of relevant UN bodies such as the United Nations University (UNU) and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), with which we have close relationships.

Mr. President,

We need to mobilize all resources to address the tremendous global challenges facing humankind. Undoubtedly, strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations is a key element in that respect. Expanding relations between

the UN and AALCO could serve that objective and contribute to the fulfillment of the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

In conclusion, may I express our hope and expectation for enhanced future cooperation between our two organizations in all areas of common concern and in the best interests of our Member States.

Finally, I would like to commend the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the subject.

Thank you. Mr. President.