



AALCO
Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization
Fifty-Fifth Annual Session
17 to 20 May 2016
Headquarters, New Delhi, India

SUMMARY REPORT*
OF THE FIFTY-FIFTH ANNUAL SESSION OF THE
ASIAN-AFRICAN LEGAL CONSULTATIVE ORGANIZATION

1. Introduction

1.1 **39** Member States of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO) participated in the Fifty-Fifth Annual Session (hereinafter "the Session") namely, **Arab Republic of Egypt, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, People's Republic of China, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Japan, Kingdom of Jordan, Kenya, State of Kuwait, Libya, Malaysia, Mauritius, Myanmar, Nepal, Nigeria, Sultanate of Oman, Pakistan, State of Qatar, Republic of Korea, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, State of Palestine, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tanzania, Thailand, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Yemen.**

1.2 Representatives of the following Regional Arbitration Centres of AALCO were also present: Kuala Lumpur Regional Centre for Arbitration (KLRCA), Regional Arbitration Centre for International Commercial Arbitration, Lagos (RCICAL), and Tehran Regional Arbitration Centre (TRAC).

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: Belarus, Eritrea and Vietnam.

* The Summary Report reflects all comments received from Member States and other participants in the Annual Session by 20 June 2016.

- II. Representatives of the following International Organization: International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC).

2. Inaugural Session

2.1 The Session commenced on 17 May 2016. **H.E. Mr. Liu Zhenmin, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, and President of Fifty-Fourth Annual Session** welcomed all the delegations to New Delhi. He touched on the imperative need for the continued revitalization and strengthening of AALCO with the view to creating a just and equitable international system, and proposed sending an appeal to all Asian and African countries to support AALCO in critical areas, including by becoming Members. He noted his appreciation for AALCO's continuing relationship with the ILC, and the publication of its Special Studies. He also reiterated China's renewed contributions to the work of AALCO through the *China-AALCO Exchange and Research Programme in International Law*. He expressed his appreciation for the work of the outgoing Secretary General, **Prof. Dr. Rahmat Mohamad** and invited the Chief Guest, **H.E. Ms. Sujata Mehta, Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, India**, to deliver the welcome address.

2.2 **H.E. Ms. Sujata Mehta, Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, India**, in her inaugural address, welcomed the delegates to New Delhi and noted the importance of the 60th year of the organization. She recalled the contribution of India to the Organization since its inception and in its attempts to crystallize the ideals and represent the hopes of Asian and African communities. She also noted that it would be important for AALCO to pursue issues and deliberations in both private and public international law as the boundaries between international law and municipal law begin to blur. She concluded by commending the work of AALCO and its alternate dispute resolution centres, expressed her satisfaction at the range of relevant topics to be deliberated upon at the Annual Session, and wished for the deliberations at the Session to be successful.

2.3 **H.E. Prof. Dr. Rahmat Mohamad, Secretary-General of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO)** welcomed all delegations to the Session. He highlighted this Annual Session is significant to the Member States and the Organization. First, the year 2016 marks the sixtieth anniversary of AALCO. Second, the election of the new Secretary-General is scheduled to be held during the Session.

2.4 **H.E. Mr. Hossein Panahi Azar, Director General for International Legal Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Islamic Republic of Iran**, proposed the vote of thanks on behalf of the President of the Fifty-Third Annual Session.

3. First Meeting of the Delegations of AALCO Member States

3.1 **The President of Fifty-Fourth Annual Session**, called the Meeting to order. The following agenda was adopted for the Fifty-Fifth Annual Session:

3.2 **Agenda**

I. Organizational Matters

1. Consideration and Adoption of the Agenda
2. Election of the President and Vice-President
3. Admission of Observers
4. Admission of New Members
5. Election of the Next Secretary-General
6. Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of AALCO
7. Proposed Budget for the Year 2017
8. Regulations for AALCO's Secretary-General's Salary, Allowances and Entitlements
9. Report on the Work of the AALCO's Regional Arbitration Centres
10. Report of the Chairman of EPG
11. Report of the Chairperson of the Working Group on International Law in Cyberspace
12. Venue of the Fifty-Sixth Annual Session

II. Matters under Article 1 (a) of the Statutes: Matters Referred to the Organization by Member States

1. Law of the Sea
2. Violations of International Law in Palestine and Other Occupied Territories by Israel and Other International Legal Issues related to the Question of Palestine
3. Violent Extremism and Terrorism (Legal Aspects)
4. International Law in Cyberspace

III. International Trade Law Matters

WTO as a Framework Agreement and Code of Conduct for World Trade

IV. Half-Day Special Meeting

Special Meeting on "Selected Items on the Agenda of the International Law Commission"

V. Any Other Matter

Side Event on "International Cooperation in Combating Violent Extremism and Terrorism", hosted by the Government of Japan

3.3 **Admission of New Members:** No New Member was admitted at the Fifty-Fifth Annual Session.

3.4 **Admission of Observers:** Belarus, Eritrea, Vietnam, and ICRC were admitted as Observers to the Fifty-Fifth Annual Session.

3.5 **The President of the Fifty-Fourth Annual Session** invited the Member States to propose candidates for the posts of President and Vice-President of the Fifty-Fifth Annual Session of AALCO. The Head of Delegation of Kenya proposed the nomination of **H.E. Dr. V.D. Sharma, Joint Secretary, Legal and Treaties Division, Ministry of External Affairs, India**, as the President of the Fifty-Fifth Annual Session of AALCO. The nomination was seconded by the Head of Delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran and he was unanimously elected. The Head of Delegation of Malaysia proposed the nomination of **H.E. Mr. Samuel Panyin Yelley, the High Commissioner of Ghana**, as Vice-President of the Fifty-Fifth Annual Session. The proposal was seconded by the Head of Delegation of Sudan and he was unanimously elected. Thereafter, the outgoing President Mr. Liu Zhenmin invited the President and Vice-President of the Fifty-Fifth Annual Session to assume their positions on the dais.

3.6 The newly-elected President, **H.E. Dr. V.D. Sharma**, thanked the Member States for nominating him and congratulated the outgoing President on the success of his tenure as President. He noted the importance of the 60th Anniversary of AALCO as well as the election of a new Secretary-General and requested the cooperation of all the AALCO Member States in the successful conduct of the Session.

4. First General Meeting

4.1 **Release of AALCO Publication: The Secretary-General of AALCO** invited the AALCO Secretariat's Principal Legal Officer to briefly describe the various publications of AALCO and their importance in the dissemination of international law knowledge in the Asian-African region. Thereafter, the following AALCO publications were released: Yearbook of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (2015, vol. XIII); AALCO Journal of International Law, (Vol. 4, Issue 1, 2015); and the special study on 'Marine Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction: An Asian-African Perspective'. She also added that two other publications of AALCO, namely the special study on 'International Law in Cyberspace' and 'Coffee Table Book on the 60th Anniversary of AALCO' were under preparation and would be released in the months to come.

5. Second Meeting of Delegations of AALCO Member States

Agenda Item: Report of the Secretary-General

5.1 **The Secretary-General of AALCO** summarized the activities and mandate undertaken since the Fifty-Fourth Annual Session and made a brief presentation on the future plans of action including research intensification programmes and cooperation with academic institutions and international organizations. As this was his last report due to the completion of his tenure, the Secretary-General reflected on the last eight years at AALCO and presented some proposals for Member States' consideration based on his

experience. He also expressed his gratitude to all Member Governments, for their constant encouragement, support and participation in all activities pertaining to the agenda of AALCO.

Agenda Item: Discussions on Budget for 2017

5.2 **The Deputy Secretary-General of AALCO** presented the budget for the year 2017, which is USD 570,600. She outlined the salient features of the budget for the year 2017 and the austerity measures taken by the Secretariat. She also drew attention to the Government of India's 7th Pay Commission and its possible implications to the regularized local staff at the AALCO Secretariat.

Agenda Item: Regulations on AALCO's Secretary-General's Salary, Allowances and other Entitlements

5.3 The **Deputy-Secretary-General of AALCO** presented the above-mentioned regulations, which had been formulated by the Sub-Committee of Liaison Officers on AALCO Secretariat's Human Resources and Financial Matters, and later approved at the Liaison Officers Meeting, pursuant to a resolution adopted at the Fifty-Fourth Annual Session of AALCO.

Agenda Item: Election of the New Secretary-General

5.4 The **President of the Fifty-Fifth Session** invited **Prof. Dr. Kennedy Godfrey Gastorn**, the candidate nominated by Tanzania and endorsed by the African Union, to deliver a statement in support of his candidacy.

5.5 **Prof. Dr. Gastorn** thanked the Member States for the opportunity to speak and made reference to Tanzania's contributions to AALCO since joining in 1973 including the then Tanzanian President's, address to AALCO at the Annual Session in 1976. He presented his agenda if elected as Secretary-General, which consisted of: Increasing engagement with AALCO Members, particularly in Africa, and increasing the membership of AALCO; Increasing strategic partnerships with other international organizations; Promoting the AALCO Regional Arbitration Centres and making them more accessible to all States; and, Continuing the good work done by the sitting Secretary-General and building on his legacy.

5.6 **Prof. Dr. Kennedy Gastorn** was thereafter elected to the post of Secretary-General by consensus with his term beginning in August 2016.

6. Second General Meeting

6.1 At the Fifty-Fifth Annual Session of AALCO the following delegations made their general statements: **Malaysia, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Japan, State of Qatar, Brunei Darussalam, Cyprus, Nepal, Arab Republic of Egypt, State of Kuwait, Islamic Republic of Iran, Kenya, India, People's Republic of China,**

Tanzania, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, South Africa, Thailand, Republic of Korea, Indonesia, Sudan, Nigeria. The observer delegation from ICRC also presented their statement.

6.2 All the delegations congratulated the President and Vice-President on assuming their posts, and congratulated the incoming Secretary-General on his election. They commended the current Secretary-General for the valuable work done by him, and many initiatives undertaken by him during his tenure, particularly in alleviating the financial situation of AALCO. They voiced their grief at the passing away of Mr. Barry Sen, the Organization's first Secretary-General, in November 2015 and reminisced about his contributions to the Organization in its first three decades. They also expressed their appreciation for the AALCO Secretariat and the Govt. of India for arrangements made by them during the Annual Session.

6.3 Many delegates opined that the occasion of the 60th Anniversary of AALCO was an appropriate time to reflect on AALCO's past and plan its future. They noted that the topics chosen by AALCO for deliberations during the current Session were of crucial current importance, as all the topics were seeing major developments in various fora. They also noted that AALCO's position, as an intergovernmental organization focused on legal issues, was a unique one and encouraged the Organization to continue placing its focus on legal issues rather than political ones. Additionally, they suggested that AALCO should continue focusing on its research initiatives and capacity-building programmes, which were proving to be beneficial to Member States.

6.4 Several States noted the role of AALCO in promoting the rule of law at the international level and reaffirmed their commitment to principles of international law through the implementation of domestic legislation and ratification of international treaties. Many States also called for further strengthening the organization through enhanced membership and called for all Members to fulfil their financial obligations to facilitate the work of the Organization.

7. Third General Meeting

Agenda Item: Violent Extremism and Terrorism (Legal Aspects)

7.1 **The Deputy Secretary-General of AALCO** updated Member States on the proceedings of the Inter-Sessional Meetings on Violent Extremism and its Manifestations that had been held on 28-29 January 2016 and 16 May 2016. He presented the outcome of the negotiations to the Member States.

7.2 Thereafter, the delegates of **Turkey, State of Kuwait, State of Qatar, India, People's Republic of China, Islamic Republic of Iran, Nepal, Japan, Nigeria, Republic of Korea, and United Arab Emirates** presented their views on the agenda item. Additionally, **Democratic People's Republic of Korea** presented their written statement for reflection in AALCO's records.

7.3 All the delegates noted the crucial importance of the topic, as many AALCO Member States were facing grave threats from extremist and terrorist organizations such as ISIL, Al-Qaeda and Boko Haram. They noted that Violent Extremism and Terrorism were issues that required cooperative and coordinated action, as they were issues with no respect for inter-State boundaries. They also recommended that AALCO continue closely following the deliberations on the topic that are occurring at the United Nations.

Agenda Item: WTO as a Framework Agreement and Code of Conduct for World Trade

7.4 **The Secretary-General of AALCO**, after giving a brief account of the Tenth WTO Ministerial Conference held at Nairobi in December 2015, briefly highlighted the outcome of the Nairobi Conference with regard to three areas of critical concern to the countries of Asia and Africa, particularly developing countries, namely agriculture, cotton, LDC issues and their impact on these countries.

7.5 **Prof. Abhijit Das, Head of the Centre for WTO Studies, IIFT, New Delhi**, made a presentation, as a panelist, on the theme “*Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) and its Legal Implications for the World Trade Organization*”. The presentation was divided into four parts focusing on the membership of TPP, issues covered under it, provisions of WTO undermining the TPP, and the interface between TPP and the dispute settlement system of the WTO. While highlighting the provisions of WTO which undermine the TPP, he stated that some of the TPP provisions are based on interpretations of WTO provisions which were rejected by Panels and the Appellate Body of the WTO DSS. He opined that fragmented jurisprudence caused by this would make trade enforcement more difficult and complex. He also elaborated on the TPP provisions that allow for member countries to choose between the WTO and TPP as a dispute settlement forum. In his view, such choice precluded the country from agitating the same matter before the other forum and that this provision is in clear conflict with the WTO mandate on mandatory jurisdiction of WTO panel in disputes arising out of agreements covered by it.

7.6 Thereafter, the delegates from **People’s Republic of China, India, Japan, South Africa, and Nepal** presented their views on the agenda item.

7.7 Many delegations expressed their support for an open, non-discriminatory, and inclusive multilateral trading system that would contribute to maximizing gains for all the members of the WTO. Some also stressed that plurilateral approaches, by definition, impinged on the multilateral trading system and could not be a substitute for it, and that plurilateral arrangements should complement rather than fragment the multilateral trading system.

7.8 Some countries were of the view that the Doha Development Agenda is important in the collective interests of the Member States of AALCO, and that it would protect the legitimate interests of poor farmers and the food security of millions of people in the developing countries.

7.9 However, one delegate was of the view that in order to keep the WTO relevant it was important to explore new approaches and “up-to-date” issues that could revitalize and reinforce the WTO negotiating function. The delegate also believed that the commitment of developing countries to enter into high levels of liberalization is essential.

8. *Half Day Special Meeting on “Selected Items on the Agenda of the International Law Commission”*

8.1 The Secretary-General of AALCO gave a brief account of the *nine* topics that had been deliberated at the Sixty-Seventh session of the Commission: *Protection of the atmosphere; Crimes against humanity; Jus cogens; Protection of the environment in relation to armed conflicts; Immunity of State Officials from foreign criminal jurisdiction; Provisional application of treaties; Identification of customary international law; the Most-Favoured-Nation clause; and Subsequent agreements and subsequent practices in relation to the interpretation of treaties*. Thereafter, he enumerated the three major topics that were to be the subject of deliberation for the day, namely: *Protection of the atmosphere; Crimes against humanity; and Jus cogens*. He encouraged the delegations to present their views on other agenda items of the Commission as well.

8.2 He also made reference to the work of the “*Informal Expert Group on Customary International Law*” (IEG) and stated that the IEG acted as a technical expert group on the topic of Identification of Customary International Law, and that the view points and comments emerged from its meetings formed a set of recommendations which have been sent to the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on the subject for his reference and consideration.

8.3 **Dr. Roy Lee, Permanent Observer of AALCO to the UN, New York**, made a statement as a panelist wherein he addressed the issues of “why” and “how” AALCO Member States could make best use of the work of the ILC. He pointed out the significant presence of the developing world in the ILC with the majority of the seats occupied by members from Asia, Africa, and Latin America. He noted that over time, as the number of codified international instruments has increased, the untapped area for the ILC to address has decreased and, additionally, the increase in the number of specialized branches of international law has reduced the scope of the ILC’s work. He also pointed out the importance of States’ responses to the requests for information by the Special Rapporteurs. In particular, Dr. Roy Lee focused on the importance of the work being done by the ILC on the topic of Customary International Law (CIL) as, *inter alia*, proving persistent objection is difficult to do practically, and therefore the ILC’s work to shed light on these nuances would help States and practitioners of international law. The ILC had considered the topic of CIL at its first sessions and decided that the best way to handle CIL was to launch programs of publications of States practice and judgments, awards and decisions from international and regional judicial bodies as they may contain evidence of customary law. He also pointed out that the ILC, in its work on the law of treaties as one of the two major sources of international law, has devoted more than forty years to the core issues and is still continuing the practice of treaty interpretation, while

the work on CIL is planned to be completed in four years. He was therefore of the opinion that this important topic may be better served by further study.

8.4 The following Member States presented their statements pursuant to the topic under discussion: **Turkey, Japan, Malaysia, India, People's Republic of China, Islamic Republic of Iran and Republic of Korea**. The observer delegation of **Vietnam** also presented their views.

8.5 All the delegates lauded the work of the Special Rapporteurs on the topics being deliberated upon by AALCO. The delegates all noted the grave importance of the topic, "Protection of Atmosphere", and some delegates noted that some of the terms being used might require further clarification and definition. With regard to "Crimes Against Humanity", delegates stressed that the work of the ILC must not conflict with existing extensive legal framework that deals with crimes against humanity. Many were also of the opinion that it may be more important to consider reasons for non-implementation of existing instruments than to create a new one. Several delegates also came together to welcome the work being done by the ILC on *jus cogens* as it was an area of law where work done by the ILC would help deepen the understanding of concerned parties.

9. Fourth General Meeting

Agenda Item: Law of the Sea

9.1 The **Deputy Secretary-General** stated that in pursuance of the mandate received at the Fifty-Fourth Annual Session, the Secretariat had prepared a special study entitled "Marine Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction: An Asian-African Perspective". The Secretariat brief for the Fifty-Fifth Annual Session primarily focused on two important issues namely: (i) marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction and (ii) exploration of deep sea resources.

9.2 The following Member States presented their views: **State of Kuwait, Cyprus, India, Nepal, People's Republic of China, Thailand, Turkey, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan and Republic of Korea**. The observer delegation of **Vietnam** also presented their views.

9.3 Member States commended the Secretariat's publication of the special study. They agreed on the importance of the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological and genetic resources, particularly in areas beyond national jurisdiction, and emphasised the importance of an instrument governing these issues, which, within the UNCLOS, constitute the common heritage of mankind, taking into account the interests and benefits of all countries while also enjoying broad support. Delegates also noted that such an instrument under the UNCLOS should not prejudice the rights of non-Parties to UNCLOS. Some States further emphasized the importance of the UNCLOS in defining the rights of both land-locked States and island States and their entitlements to marine resources. Delegates also appreciated the work of the First Session of the Preparatory

Committee on Marine Biodiversity in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction and the UN Open-Ended Informal Working Group.

Working Group Meeting on International Law in Cyberspace

9.4 The **President of the Fifty-Fifth Annual Session** invited Member States to propose candidates for the posts of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Rapporteur of the Working Group Meeting on International Law in Cyberspace. The Delegation of South Africa proposed the nomination of **H.E. Mr. Hossein Panahi Azar, Director General for International Legal Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Islamic Republic of Iran**, as the Chairperson and the nomination was seconded by the Delegation of People's Republic of China wherein he was unanimously elected. The Delegation of India proposed the nomination of **H.E. Ms. Njeri Mwangi Wachira, Chief State Counsel, Kenya**, as Vice-Chairperson and the proposal was seconded by the Delegation of Uganda and she was thereafter unanimously elected. The President announced the prior nomination of **Prof. Huang Zhixiang of Wuhan University Law School**, as the Rapporteur, which was supported by the Delegation of India, wherein he was unanimously elected. The elected officials thereafter took their place on the dias.

9.5 The **Chairperson** started the substantive portion of the Meeting by inviting the **Rapporteur** to make a statement. **Prof. Huang** noted that it was an honour to be elected as Rapporteur for the topic. He discussed the importance of the constantly evolving topic at hand for the international community and the importance of the working group's deliberations in highlighting the views of Asian and African States at the international level. Before inviting delegations to make statements, the Chairperson encouraged Member States to focus their attention on four areas, as mandated by last year's resolution: international law pertaining to State sovereignty and cyberspace; peaceful uses of cyberspace; rules of international cooperation in combating cybercrimes; and identification of relevant provisions of the UN Charter and other international instruments related to cyberspace.

9.6 The **Secretary-General of AALCO** then gave a brief overview of the topic and AALCO's work on the topic. He also informed Member States of the side-event being hosted by AALCO during the 25th Session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) at the United Nations Office in Vienna on 23 May 2016. The theme of the event is "Cybercrimes and International Cooperation: An Asian-African Perspective".

9.7 Delegations from the following Member States made statements: **People's Republic of China, State of Kuwait, Islamic Republic of Iran, India, Japan, Malaysia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Republic of Korea**. Additionally, the observer delegations from **Vietnam** and the **ICRC** also made statements.

9.8 The delegations welcomed the creation of the Working Group and congratulated the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Rapporteur on their appointments and affirmed

their commitment to the Group. A few delegations also expressed their confidence that AALCO Working Group could help build consensus among the AALCO Member States on the applicability of international law in cyberspace matters. It was hoped by some delegates that work done by the Working Group and Secretariat in its forthcoming study could help broaden understanding and guide future discussions on the topic in international fora. Most delegations also reaffirmed the applicability of the cardinal principles of the UN Charter to activities in cyberspace. In this context, attention was also drawn to the Third Report (2015) of the UN Group of Governmental Experts (UNGGE).

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

9.9 The **Deputy Secretary-General of AALCO** reiterated the illegality of the occupation of Palestinian territory by Israeli forces and their violations of international law and international humanitarian law on the ground. He mentioned the membership of the State of Palestine in the International Criminal Court and noted that invoking the jurisdiction of the ICC would be an exercise demonstrating the strengths, weaknesses, and efficacy of the ICC and other international institutions.

9.10 Thereafter, the delegates of **India, State of Palestine, Arab Republic of Egypt, State of Qatar, People's Republic of China, Japan, United Arab Emirates, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, State of Kuwait, Islamic Republic of Iran, South Africa, Malaysia and Tanzania** made statements on the topic.

9.11 All the Member States spoke of their solidarity with the State of Palestine and their support of the just cause of the Palestinian people in their quest for the right to self-determination, independence and sovereignty. Many reiterated their support for a two-State solution and an independent Palestine with its borders the same as those established in 1967 and with its capital in East Jerusalem. Several delegations also called for the cessation of Israel's violations of its international obligations, especially those under various UN Security Council resolutions, the four Geneva Conventions and all relevant human rights instruments, and for the cessation of the occupation and illegal activities being conducted in the Occupied Palestinian Territory such as the construction of settlements. Several delegations also condemned the continuous violation of the rights of the Palestinian people and called for an end to these violations.

10. Third Meeting of the Delegations of AALCO Member States

Agenda Item: Report on the Work of AALCO's Regional Arbitration Centres

10.1 The **Deputy Secretary-General of AALCO** gave a brief overview of the evolution of the regional arbitration centres of AALCO. He, on behalf of AALCO Secretariat, thanked the Tehran Regional Arbitration Centre (TRAC) for organizing and hosting the first meeting of AALCO Regional Arbitration Centres at Tehran last month.

10.2 This was followed by presentations made by the Directors of the following arbitration centres: **Prof. Datuk Sundra Rajoo, Director, Kuala Lumpur Regional Centre for Arbitration (KLRC)**; **Hon. Wilfred Danola Ikatari, Director, Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration-Lagos (RCICAL)**; **Dr. Oveis Rezvanian, Director, Tehran Regional Arbitration Centre (TRAC)**. All these presentations had outlined the activities undertaken by their respective Centres in the previous year.

10.3 A statement was also given by the Delegation of **Kenya** on the establishment and recent activities of the Nairobi Centre for International Arbitration (NCIA).

Report of the Chairperson of the EPG

10.4 The **Deputy Secretary-General of AALCO**, on behalf of the Chairman of the EPG, presented the report on the Sixth Meeting of the Eminent Person's Group, which took place on 16 May 2016.

10.5 During the discussions in the EPG, attention was drawn to the fact that AALCO has no diplomatic privileges or immunities in the United States—the host country of the United Nations—which, as a result, has certain effects on AALCO's activities, personnel and/or representatives coming from AALCO Headquarters.

Report of the Chairperson of the Working Group on International Law in Cyberspace

10.6 The **Chairperson** of the Working Group presented his report on the First Meeting of the Working Group, which took place on 19 May 2016.

Side Event: International Cooperation in Combating Violent Extremism and Terrorism

10.7 A side event organized by the Government of Japan was held at lunchtime on 17 May 2016. Following the opening remarks by Prof. Dr. Rahmat Mohamad, Secretary-General of AALCO, and the keynote presentation by H.E. Ms. Tomoko Akane, Ambassador for International Judicial Cooperation, participating Member States shared their experiences and views on how to effectively address the issue of violent extremism from the perspective of criminal justice practitioners.

Side-Event: Photo Exhibition on China-AALCO Exchange and Research Program on International Law

10.8 A sideline photo exhibition was hosted jointly by China and AALCO on the work and achievements of the *China-AALCO Exchange and Research Program on International Law*, which was established at the Fifty-Fourth Annual Session. The President of the Fifty-Fourth Annual Session, H.E. Mr. Liu Zhenmin, and the Secretary-General of AALCO, Prof. Dr. Rahmat Mohamad, attended and addressed the audience.

Adoption of message of thanks to the President of India

Excellency,

On behalf of all the Delegations of the Member States, Observers and the Secretariat of AALCO, attending the Fifty-Fifth Annual Session of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO), I would like to extend the following message as a token of our heartfelt appreciation, gratitude and respect to the People and Government of India:

“We, the participants in the Fifty-Fifth Annual Session of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization, would like to seize this opportunity to convey our profound gratitude and respect to Your Excellency, and through you to your esteemed Government and the people of the Republic of India, for graciously helping and assisting to host the Fifty-Fifth Session of AALCO in this beautiful city of New Delhi. Excellency, I thank the Government of India on behalf of AALCO, and on my own behalf, for supporting in hosting this Session.

Your Excellency, we are aware that throughout AALCO’s sixty-year history, India has attached great importance to the Organization and has magnanimously contributed the headquarter buildings. India has always actively participated in the activities and work programme of the Organization, be it substantive, administrative or financial matters, ever since the inception of AALCO as the Asian Legal Consultative Committee (ALCC) in 1956. India has always taken a keen interest in the deliberations during the Annual Sessions and has undertaken to strengthen the agenda and the role of the Organization among the comity of nations. On this occasion, a “New Delhi Declaration on the Commemoration of the 60th Anniversary of AALCO” was adopted.

Your Excellency would be pleased to know that a spirit of constructive dialogue and cooperation amongst attending delegations marked this Session, thus enabling us to take crucial decisions on the Organizational as well as substantive matters. Amongst the many factors that paved the way for the success of the Session, one of the prime ones was the excellent cooperation from the Government of India, which contributed significantly towards the excellent achievements of our deliberations.

In this beautiful city of New Delhi, famed for its picturesque juxtaposition of history and modernity, we the delegates of the Fifty-Fifth Annual Session of AALCO would like to place on record our sincere gratitude for the full cooperation that the Government of India has extended to AALCO and its Member States by hosting the Annual Session with warmth, graciousness and ability, and ensuring that this momentous occasion of the Sixtieth Anniversary of AALCO was a memorable one.

Your Excellency, please accept the assurances of our highest respect and consideration and may the Almighty bless the endeavours of your great country.”

Venue of AALCO's Fifty-Sixth Annual Session

10.9 The venue of the Fifty-Sixth Annual Session has not yet been decided. As the Fifty-Fifth Annual Session was held in New Delhi, over the coming months Member States in Africa will be approached in relation to the possibility of their hosting the Fifty-Sixth Annual Session.

Adoption of Resolutions

10.10 The following resolutions were adopted at the third meeting of delegations of AALCO Member States on 20 May 2016.

Organizational Matters

RES/55/ORG 1	Report of the Secretary-General on Organizational, Administrative and Financial Matters
RES/55/ORG 1A	Report on the Regulations on AALCO's Secretary-General's Salary, Allowances and other Entitlements
RES/55/ORG 2	AALCO'S Budget for the Year 2017
RES/55/ORG 3	Report on AALCO's Regional Arbitration Centres
RES/55/ORG 4	Appointment of the Secretary-General
RES/55/ORG 4A	Expression of Gratitude to the out-going Secretary-General

Substantive Matters

RES/55/S 2	The Law of the Sea
RES/55/S 4	Violations of International Law in Palestine and Other Occupied Territories by Israel and Other International Legal Issues related to the Question of Palestine
RES/55/S 9	Violent Extremism and Terrorism (Legal Aspects)
RES/55/S 13	WTO as Framework Agreement and Code of Conduct for World Trade
RES/55/S 17	International Law in Cyberspace
RES/55/SP 1	Resolution on the Special Meeting on "Selected Items on the Agenda of the International Law Commission"

Declaration

AALCO/DEC/55 New Delhi Declaration on the Commemoration of the 60th
Anniversary of AALCO

Consideration of the Summary Report

10.11 The draft summary report of the Fifty-Fifth Annual Session was placed for the consideration of Member States. The Member States adopted the draft summary report and thereafter they were requested to send in their written comments on the same to the Secretariat within one month, after which it would be finalized.

11. Fifth General Meeting and Concluding Session

Vote of Thanks

11.1 A vote of thanks on behalf of Asian Member States was proposed by the Delegation of **Brunei Darussalam** and a vote of thanks on behalf of the African Member States was given by the Delegation of **South Africa**. A vote of thanks on behalf of the Observer delegations was given by the Delegation of Viet Nam.

11.2 **H.E. Dr. Sharma**, the President of the Fifty-Fifth Annual Session delivered the concluding remarks.

The Fifty-Fifth Annual Session of AALCO was thereafter adjourned.