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Thirty-fifth session

REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ITEM IN THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA  
OF THE THIRTY-FIFTH SESSION

OBSERVER STATUS FOR THE ASIAN-AFRICAN LEGAL CONSULTATIVE  
COMMITTEE IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Letter dated 10 July 1980 from the Permanent Representative of  
India to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, which is an original founding member of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee, I have the honour to request, pursuant to rule 13 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the inclusion in the agenda of the thirty-fifth session of the Assembly of an item entitled "Observer status for the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee in the General Assembly".

In accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure, an explanatory memorandum concerning the request is annexed to this letter.

(Signed) Brajesh C. MISHRA  
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary  
Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations

ANNEX

Explanatory memorandum

1. The United Nations from its very inception has in accordance with its purposes and principles taken various steps to promote wider acceptance and codification of international law and to bring about international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character at global and regional levels, and to this end has given encouragement to organizations engaged in these fields.
2. The Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee which emerged in 1956 as a tangible outcome of the Asian-African Conference held at Bandung in 1955, has established itself as a forum for Asian-African co-operation in matters of common concern. Although the Committee was originally intended to function in the field of international law in order to implement the principles of an international legal order as enshrined in the Bandung Declaration, its activities have gradually been extended to economic relations and trade law. It has now been functioning since 1970 as a major forum of consultations on important issues before the United Nations.
3. The Committee has its headquarters in New Delhi (India). There are at present 39 participating States in the Committee, namely, Bangladesh, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, the Gambia, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mongolia, Nepal, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, the Philippines, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Sri Lanka, the Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Turkey, Uganda, the United Arab Emirates, the United Republic of Tanzania and Yemen; including Botswana, Ethiopia and Saudi Arabia as associate members.
4. In addition, the Committee's regular sessions are attended by a large number of observer delegations representing Governments from various parts of the world, consistent with the global impact of the Committee's activities.
5. At the twenty-first session of the Committee, which was held in conjunction with the Silver Jubilee of the Bandung Conference, 39 States were represented by observer delegations, namely, Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Cuba, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, the German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Haiti, the Holy See, Hungary, Italy, Lebanon, Lesotho, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the Niger, Poland, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the Sudan, Trinidad and Tobago, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, Venezuela, Viet Nam and Yugoslavia.
6. Since 1960 the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee has been working in close collaboration with the United Nations and its various organs and agencies, and the United Nations has been represented at the Committee's regular sessions since 1975.

7. In 1960 the Committee entered into official relations with the International Law Commission, in pursuance of which the Commission is traditionally represented by its Chairman at the Committee's regular sessions. In 1968 the Committee was accorded the status of a participating intergovernmental organization with the United Nations Commission on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and in 1970 official relations between the Committee and the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) were established. In addition, the Committee works in close collaboration with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and various regional commissions of the United Nations.

8. The Committee has been invited by the United Nations to various plenipotentiary conferences convoked by the United Nations since 1961. At the Vienna Conference on diplomatic relations in 1961 and the Conference of plenipotentiaries on consular relations in 1963 the Committee's recommendations were circulated as official documents of the conferences. The Committee played a leading role in the Vienna Conference on the Law of Treaties in 1968 and 1969, and its participation in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor beyond the Limits of National Jurisdiction and the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea since 1971 has been extremely productive. The Committee also participated in the United Nations Conference on Succession of States in Respect of Treaties in 1977 and the Conference on Carriage of Goods by Sea in 1978. The Committee has been invited to all meetings of UNCTAD and UNCITRAL and it has made a valuable contribution in the deliberations of both these organizations.

9. It is felt that the existing relationship between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee, which has existed since 1960, should now be formalized and further strengthened through the granting of observer status to the Committee in the General Assembly and its subsidiary organs. This would also enable attendance by observers on behalf of the Committee during discussions on legal and economic issues in the General Assembly.

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