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## Sixth Committee

### Summary record of the 18th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 19 October 2018, at 10 a.m.

*Chair:* Mr. Biang ..... (Gabon)  
*later:* Ms. Kremžar (Vice-Chair)..... (Slovenia)

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.*

**Agenda item 84: Consideration of effective measures to enhance the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives** (*continued*) (A/73/189)

1. **Mr. Nyanid** (Cameroon) said that acts of violence and harassment against diplomatic and consular representatives or against officials or representatives of international organizations were indefensible and must be vigorously condemned. In accordance with unanimously accepted principles and rules of international law, including those enshrined in the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, receiving States had a duty to ensure the protection of diplomatic and consular missions and their personnel. Respect for the principles governing diplomatic and consular relations was a basic prerequisite for the maintenance of cordial relations among States and for the fulfilment of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

2. Cameroon was a party to the two Vienna Conventions and called on all States that had not yet become parties to those instruments to do so. It also called on States to put in place measures to prevent and prohibit illegal activities of persons, groups and organizations that encouraged, instigated, organized or engaged in the perpetration of acts against the security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions, representatives and officials in their territory. To that end, his Government had established special police units responsible for the protection of diplomats. The aim of such protection was to ensure that diplomats and consular officials could carry out their duties; in no way did it grant them unlimited powers or give them licence to engage in illegal activities. Diplomatic and consular representatives must act in good faith and respect the laws of the receiving State.

3. Ensuring respect for the privileges and immunities of diplomatic and consular officials was of mutual benefit to all States. Since antiquity, it had been recognized that protecting foreign emissaries was essential in order to build trust between nations and ensure international cooperation and peaceful international relations. The weakening of protections for diplomatic and consular representatives, which appeared to be the current trend, was therefore cause for concern. It was urgent to reaffirm the principles of international law underpinning diplomatic and consular relations and to seek new ways of strengthening respect for them. Although the General Assembly had adopted several resolutions emphasizing the fundamental

importance of respecting those norms, firmly condemning any violations thereof and calling on States to take measures to ensure that such violations were investigated and prosecuted, his delegation believed that the Assembly should adopt another resolution, reaffirming that States should strictly comply with and implement the provisions of international law relating to diplomatic and consular relations and that they should take all necessary measures to prevent acts of violence and harassment against diplomatic and consular representatives, in particular by encouraging cooperation between States and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

4. **Mr. Dos Santos Pereira** (Timor-Leste) said that respect for the principles and rules of international law governing diplomatic and consular relations was a prerequisite for the normal conduct of relations among States and for the fulfilment of the purposes and principles of the Charter. Acts of violence against diplomatic and consular missions and representatives had increased, jeopardizing or claiming innocent lives and seriously impeding the normal work of such representatives. Diplomatic and consular representatives played an important role in developing and strengthening friendly relations and cooperation among States, and their privileges and immunities were inviolable and must be protected.

5. As a young State, Timor-Leste reaffirmed its commitment to uphold legally binding international instruments, international customary law and other principles of international law, including the 1961 and 1963 Vienna Conventions, which guaranteed privileges and immunities for diplomatic and consular missions and representatives in the receiving States. As a party to those instruments, Timor-Leste condemned any act of violence against diplomatic missions or officials. Such acts should be fully investigated with a view to bringing offenders to justice and preventing impunity.

6. His delegation encouraged all Member States, without prejudice to sovereignty rights or the principle of non-intervention, to take into account the applicable principles and rules of international law concerning diplomatic and consular relations and to implement practical measures to prevent and prohibit illegal activities by persons, groups or organizations that supported, instigated, organized or engaged in the perpetration of acts against the security and safety of the missions, representatives or officials of other States. At the same time, it affirmed that diplomatic and consular officials were duty-bound to respect the laws and regulations of receiving States.

7. **Ms. Sande** (Uruguay) said that the obligation to protect foreign emissaries was one of the oldest norms of international law and had been recognized since before the establishment of the first diplomatic missions in the fifteenth century. States had the obligation to respect and protect the inviolability of diplomatic and consular premises, documents and communications and to prevent any violation of the immunities of accredited diplomatic and consular missions and representatives in their territories. It was an obligation rooted in the sovereignty and equality of States and an indisputable rule of customary law; States could not justify non-compliance by claiming that they were not bound by a treaty on the matter. Such protection was essential to ensure that diplomatic and consular representatives could perform their duties. Of course the counterpart to the obligation of States to protect diplomatic representatives was the obligation of those representatives to respect the laws of the receiving State.

8. As a party to the Vienna Conventions of 1961 and 1963 and a strong supporter of multilateralism and the rule of law, Uruguay condemned any act of violence or terrorism against diplomatic or consular missions or representatives, or against representatives to international organizations, and fulfilled its obligation to ensure their safety in strict compliance with customary and treaty-based norms. At the same time, it condemned any illegitimate use of diplomatic or consular premises or abuse of the immunities and privileges of their representatives. Her delegation regretted the weakening of the rule of law at the international level and the violations of the most sacred principles of international law by groups that threatened peace and security through acts of terrorism. In the face of such alarming acts, it was necessary to heighten awareness of the need to take the necessary measures to ensure the protection of diplomatic and consular missions and missions to international organizations.

9. **Mr. Sultani** (Afghanistan) said that diplomatic protection was part of a broad set of principles and rules of international law governing diplomatic and consular relations. The protection of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives was of great importance for the development and enhancement of normal, cooperative and mutually beneficial diplomatic relations between States. Acts of violence against diplomatic and consular representatives, and against representatives of non-governmental organizations, undermined the normal functioning of relations between States and were condemnable in all regards.

10. Following the horrific attacks of 11 September 2001, the global community had converged to help Afghanistan begin a new chapter in its modern history

and become a secure, stable and prosperous country. Consequently, there had been a substantial increase in the number of diplomatic and consular missions based in Kabul. The continued threat of terrorism in Afghanistan had spared no one, including the military, civilian and humanitarian personnel working with national officials to ensure the country's security and stability. In November 2016, as noted in the Secretary-General's report (A/73/189), a group of extremists had attacked the German Consulate General in Mazar-e-Sharif, gravely endangering the Consulate's staff and premises. Afghan security forces had responded jointly with German special forces and suppressed the attack, which had claimed the lives of 4 Afghans and injured more than 120 others.

11. In January 2017, terrorists had attacked the Governor's guest house in Kandahar province, where a meeting between local authorities and a visiting delegation of the United Arab Emirates was taking place. The attack had resulted in the death of 12 people, including the Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates and several Afghan government officials. In May 2017, in perhaps the most devastating terrorist attack in Kabul since 2001, a truck bombing had occurred at a busy intersection leading to the diplomatic zone. The attack had claimed the lives of more than 150 Afghans and left more than 400 severely injured. Among those killed had been two Afghan security officials who had prevented the truck from entering the diplomatic quarter, thereby avoiding an even greater catastrophe.

12. The Afghan authorities had conducted comprehensive investigations of those attacks with a view to identifying the culprits and holding them accountable. The findings of the investigations had been shared with the authorities of the countries concerned. Afghanistan was firmly committed to fulfilling its national and international obligations, including under the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, to ensure the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives. To that end, among other measures, a special security unit had been set up within the Ministry of the Interior to protect the premises of the diplomatic community and international organizations. In addition, that Ministry, together with the Ministry of Defence and the National Directorate for Security, had established a joint protection force to enhance security and law enforcement measures for diplomatic protection, and the number of security personnel around diplomatic and consular missions had been substantially increased.

13. **Mr. Al Arsan** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that all Governments had a legal and moral obligation to ensure respect for the protection, security and immunity of

diplomatic and consular missions and representatives, in accordance with both collective international conventions and bilateral treaties and agreements between countries. It was unacceptable for Governments to jeopardize that obligation for the sake of reprisals, either because of political disagreements or for short-term gain. No policy or political consideration could justify the manipulation or deliberate misinterpretation by any Government of the international legal instruments governing diplomatic and consular relations or of host-country agreements with the United Nations or other international organizations. In order to strengthen confidence among States, host countries must be genuinely committed to protecting diplomatic missions and their property and personnel, irrespective of any political disagreements, and refrain from misinterpreting or misapplying host-country agreements.

14. Despite the difficult security situation caused by acts of terrorism in the Syrian Arab Republic over the previous eight years, his Government had strengthened protection for diplomatic and consular missions and personnel in Damascus and other cities in order to avoid any failure on its part to fulfil the country's obligations under the conventions and treaties concerning diplomatic and consular relations. It had also strengthened security for the missions, offices and personnel of the United Nations and other organizations. It continued to ensure protection for the premises of diplomatic and consular missions that had been closed for security reasons or because the Governments concerned had decided to sever diplomatic relations with the Syrian Arab Republic, and it had taken measures to enable representatives of those Governments, or persons authorized by them, to enter the closed premises to remove property or carry out maintenance activities.

15. It was regrettable that other Governments had not extended the same protections to his country's diplomatic and consular missions and representatives. Indeed, Syrian missions in several countries had been attacked by mobs, vandalized and looted, and vehicles belonging to Syrian diplomatic missions had been burned. Syrian diplomats had been insulted or attacked, sometimes in full view of the security authorities of the host country. Those authorities had clearly not been willing to ensure the safety of the Syrian diplomats or to enforce the laws of their own countries, nor had the legal authorities of those countries been willing to hold those responsible to account.

16. Moreover, the Governments of some countries that had severed diplomatic ties with the Syrian Arab Republic were not ensuring the protection of closed

Syrian diplomatic premises. In one European country, the Syrian embassy was not being protected, even though Syrian diplomatic personnel continued to work there. The Government of one Arab Gulf country had permitted individuals who were not legal representatives of the Syrian Government to enter such premises, make use of them and steal diplomatic property, which was an act of piracy. His Government was compiling a record of the facts and evidence concerning those incidents and would not hesitate to take all necessary measures to exercise its right under the two Vienna Conventions and other international instruments to obtain reparation for the physical and moral damages suffered.

17. His Government wished to express its full support for the Government of the Russian Federation in the face of the actions taken by the Government of the United States of America, which, without any legal basis, had seized premises belonging to the Government of the Russian Federation and prevented access to those premises by representatives of that Government. Since the beginning of 2018, the Government of the United States had also prevented Syrian representatives from entering the closed Syrian embassy in Washington, D.C., and it had restricted the movements of the diplomatic personnel assigned to the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations, which was a violation of both the Headquarters Agreement and the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations. His delegation would continue to raise that and related issues in the framework of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country.

18. The Sixth Committee should intensify its work on the agenda item under consideration and should adopt a draft resolution showing that the United Nations and its Member States took seriously their responsibility to ensure the effective implementation of international legal instruments governing diplomatic and consular relations and the protection of diplomatic and consular premises, property and personnel. The fulfilment of that responsibility was essential in order to maintain the credibility of the relevant instruments and to preserve trust between countries.

19. **Mr. Ahmadi** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the fundamental principle of inviolability of the premises of diplomatic and consular missions and their representatives was a universally accepted norm and a well-defined obligation under international law that had been observed for centuries in relations among nations. The 1961 and 1963 Vienna Conventions, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes Against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic

Agents, the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations and various headquarters agreements provided a complete framework for the establishment and maintenance of diplomatic relations on the basis of consent between independent sovereign States and were firmly established as a cornerstone of modern international relations. Moreover, Article 105 of the Charter of the United Nations underscored the importance of ensuring that representatives of Member States enjoyed the privileges and immunities necessary for the independent exercise of their functions in connection with the Organization. Any kind of pressure brought to bear on members of a diplomatic mission accredited to the United Nations, including any discrimination in granting privileges on political grounds, thus ran counter to the purposes and principles of the Organization.

20. The General Assembly had adopted several resolutions reaffirming the obligations of States with respect to the safety and security of diplomatic and consular missions and agents. However, some Iranian diplomatic and consular missions and their personnel had been targeted by illegal acts, including terrorist attacks, in the previous two years, which had resulted in some casualties. It was a matter of deep concern to his delegation that in certain cases the host countries had not taken appropriate steps, and such illegal acts continued to occur. The Islamic Republic of Iran, as a party to the 1961 and 1963 Vienna Conventions, remained committed to ensuring compliance with the provisions of those instruments and called upon all States to take appropriate measures to ensure the safety and security of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives.

21. **Mr. Elsadig Ali Sayed Ahmed** (Sudan) said that the protection of diplomatic and consular representatives and the security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and their documents and communications was a cornerstone of international relations, enshrined in the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. Diplomatic privileges were granted to ensure that State representatives were able to perform their functions effectively. Receiving States were duty-bound under the two Vienna Conventions to protect diplomatic and consular missions. Special attention should be paid to the threat posed by terrorists, extremists and armed groups, and efforts to protect embassies and consulates from such threats should be redoubled.

22. The events described in the Secretary-General's report on the matter clearly illustrated the risks faced by States' diplomatic representatives. His delegation

strongly condemned all violations of the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives and of missions and representatives to intergovernmental organizations, and expressed its solidarity with the victims of such violations. His Government had taken various measures to ensure the protection and safety of members of the diplomatic corps and would continue to fulfil its obligations in that regard, particularly those enshrined in the 1961 and 1963 Vienna Conventions. His delegation called upon all States that had not yet acceded to those two conventions to do so.

23. All States should commit to upholding the principles and rules of international law and the provisions of United Nations resolutions relating to diplomatic and consular relations. States should also take the necessary measures to protect the archives, documents and communications of diplomatic and consular missions. At the same time, States should ensure that diplomatic privileges and immunities were not abused, and should seek the peaceful settlement of any disputes that arose in that regard.

24. His delegation agreed with other delegations that had highlighted the risks that digital technology posed to the protection of diplomatic archives, documents and communications. The resolution to be adopted by the General Assembly on the matter should address those risks.

25. **Mr. Bondiuk** (Ukraine), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that his Government strongly condemned any attacks or other violent acts against diplomatic or consular missions and took all appropriate steps to protect them and to investigate any such incidents, in accordance with the 1961 and 1963 Vienna Conventions. His delegation wished to remind the delegation of the Russian Federation that it had informed the Secretary-General of a number of violations of the safety and security of Ukrainian diplomatic and consular missions in the Russian Federation. Unfortunately, there had been no reaction from Russian law enforcement agencies to many of those incidents, which included acts of vandalism and attacks against the embassy of Ukraine in the Russian Federation. His delegation called upon the Russian Federation to comply with its obligations to make available the results of its investigations of acts of violence against Ukrainian diplomatic and consular missions in the Russian Federation and to take all appropriate measures to prevent such acts in the future.

**Agenda item 81: United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law (A/73/415)**

26. **Ms. Pobee** (Ghana), speaking as Chair of the Advisory Committee on the United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law and also in her national capacity, said that the Advisory Committee had held its fifty-third session on 4 October 2018 to consider the report of the Secretary-General (A/73/415). It had also reviewed the implementation of Programme activities undertaken in 2018 and the activities proposed for 2019, including the resulting administrative and financial implications.

27. As had been consistently recognized by the General Assembly, the Programme of Assistance was a core activity of the United Nations which continued to provide the foundation for the Organization's efforts to promote better knowledge of international law and thereby establish conditions under which justice and respect for international law could be maintained, as envisaged in the Charter. It was evident that the Programme remained relevant. The large number of applications received for the International Law Fellowship Programme and the regional courses in international law, particularly from candidates from African countries, attested to the need for training and the value of the Programme as a tool for capacity-building. It was gratifying to note that the provision of regular budget funding had made it possible to hold all three regional courses in 2018. She wished to express appreciation to the Member States that had hosted the courses. She was also grateful to the regional commissions for their support.

28. The United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law was a unique element of the Programme of Assistance, which had the potential to make high-quality learning resources readily available to students and international law practitioners worldwide at relatively low cost, but only where there was reliable internet connectivity. The launch of the podcasts of the Lecture Series in 2018 had been a good step towards significantly increasing access to the Audiovisual Library for those who lacked high-speed Internet. However, there was also a need to serve those without any Internet access at all. Support for the Library's efforts to make materials available on flash drives and CD-ROMs and for its desktop publishing activities should therefore continue.

29. She wished to express thanks to members of the Advisory Committee for their continued commitment to

the Programme of Assistance. Member States had provided constructive advice on such issues as the dissemination of lecture and training materials, technological challenges relating to use of the Audiovisual Library, and the need for resources to cover the cost of preparation of the *International Law Handbook* in all official languages. She was also grateful to the Codification Division of the Office of Legal Affairs for its dedication to the effective implementation of the Programme.

30. **Ms. Elbaz** (Office of Legal Affairs), speaking in her capacity as Secretary of the Advisory Committee, said that, as the debates in the Sixth Committee attested, the issues of international law facing States today were increasingly complex. As a result, the need for international law training and training materials had increased. Thanks to the unwavering support of the Advisory Committee and that of the Sixth Committee, the Programme of Assistance, now in its fifty-third year, had been able to help meet those needs.

31. The resources provided under the regular budget had enabled the Codification Division to organize four training programmes in international law in 2018: the International Law Fellowship Programme in The Hague and the three regional courses, for Africa, for Asia-Pacific and for Latin America and the Caribbean. A total of 81 participants from 75 Member States had received fellowships covering all their expenses. The Division thanked the United Nations regional commissions and the host countries, Chile, Ethiopia and Thailand, for their support. She hoped that Member States would encourage qualified female candidates to apply to participate in the regional course for Africa to be held in February 2019.

32. The Codification Division had published the *Recueil de droit international*, the French equivalent of the *International Law Handbook*, in 2018. The *Handbook* contained a collection of key instruments of international law and was the principal resource used in the Programme's training courses. The electronic versions of the publication were available free of charge on the website of the Audiovisual Library and would also be disseminated to universities and national training centres in developing countries. The preparation of the *Recueil* and the *Handbook* had been possible thanks to generous voluntary contributions from several Member States. The Division intended to prepare versions of the *Handbook* in the other official languages if sufficient voluntary contributions could be mobilized.

33. Only a limited number of lawyers could participate in the training programmes, and it was therefore

important to continue to maintain and enrich the Audiovisual Library, which offered high-quality online training free of charge to an unlimited number of people across the globe. Since its creation in 2008, the Library has been accessed by more than 1.7 million users in all 193 Member States. During the reporting period, 50 new lectures had been added to the Library, and the range of topics covered and the linguistic and geographic diversity of the available content had been broadened. The Library had also been made more accessible. All lectures in the Lecture Series were now available free of charge as audio files, which could be downloaded and listened to as podcasts on a computer or mobile device.

34. The staff of the Codification Division was grateful to the General Assembly for having included funding for the Programme of Assistance in the regular budget. However, in order for the Programme to reach its full potential, voluntary contributions remained indispensable. She therefore wished to thank the Member States that had made contributions during the reporting period.

35. **Mr. Jares** (Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea), recalling that the General Assembly, in resolution 72/73, had expressed its appreciation for the important contribution to the capacity-building of developing countries and the promotion of the law of the sea made by the Hamilton Shirley Amerasinghe Memorial Fellowship on the Law of the Sea, said that the Fellowship had now been awarded to 32 individuals, of whom 15 were women and 17 were men, from 29 developing countries. Those professionals were now making important contributions in their respective countries and regions.

36. It was more important than ever for developing countries to build and maintain the capacity to participate actively in processes related to the oceans and the law of the sea, including the implementation of the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which noted the importance of ensuring the integrity of all ecosystems, including oceans, and the ongoing negotiations of the intergovernmental conference on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction. It was therefore critical that the necessary funding be made available so that the Fellowship could continue to be awarded. He recalled in that regard that it had not been awarded for several years between 2007 and 2016, owing to lack of funding, and that in 2017 a modified award for a shorter period had been given, as there had not been enough funding for the standard award. As the

Secretary-General had noted in his report (A/73/415), the amount currently available might not be sufficient for a standard Fellowship award in 2019. He wished to thank those Member States that had made voluntary contributions to support the Fellowship, as called for in General Assembly resolution 72/73, and urged States and other relevant stakeholders to continue to make contributions so that a full award could be granted in 2019 and beyond.

37. **Mr. Mattar** (Egypt), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Programme of Assistance was an effective tool for disseminating greater knowledge of international law and thereby strengthening international peace and security and promoting friendly relations and cooperation among States. Jurists, academics, diplomats and other public officials from developing countries had derived great benefit from the Programme's regional courses, fellowships and publications, and from the Audiovisual Library. The Group therefore welcomed the allocation under the regular budget for the biennium 2018–2019 of the necessary resources for the International Law Fellowship Programme, the three regional courses and the Audiovisual Library.

38. The Audiovisual Library enabled lawyers, scholars, diplomats and other individuals around the world to access high-quality legal training free of charge through the Internet. Access to and use of the Audiovisual Library should continue to be promoted. The Group was pleased to learn that the Codification Division was undertaking off-site recording sessions in various locations in order to promote broader geographical and linguistic representation among lecturers and to record lecturers who were unable to travel to New York. It also commended the Division for successfully completing the podcast project, which had made all lectures in the Lecture Series available as audio files, thereby facilitating access to them for users without reliable high-speed Internet.

39. The Programme of Assistance played a vital role in promoting the rule of law at the national and international levels, which was one of the targets of Sustainable Development Goal 16. The capacity-building activities undertaken in implementation of the Programme enabled individuals to acquire a greater knowledge of international law, thereby fostering the participation of developing countries in various multilateral frameworks and instruments and ultimately helping to strengthen the rule of law. The Group remained committed to that objective, as reflected in the Ministerial Declaration adopted at the forty-second annual meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the States members of the Group of 77, in which the

Ministers had expressed their commitment to including the International Law Fellowship Programme, the seminars and regional training on international treaty laws and practice and the legal publications and training materials, as well as the funding necessary for the Hamilton Shirley Amerasinghe Memorial Fellowship on the Law of the Sea, in the regular budget of the United Nations for the biennium 2018–2019. Regular budget funding would help to ensure the continuation of related activities in coming years. At the same time, voluntary contributions, including in-kind contributions, remained vital.

40. **Mr. Jaiteh** (Gambia), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that the Group was pleased that funding had been allocated for the International Law Fellowship Programme, the United Nations regional courses in international law and the Audiovisual Library of International Law under the regular budget for the biennium 2018–2019. The Group hoped that all Member States remained committed to upholding the objectives of studying, understanding, teaching and disseminating knowledge of international law, which were essential for a world order based on the rule of law, and to taking the necessary steps to ensure the continuation of the Programme of Assistance. In particular, it urged all Member States to join in efforts to ensure the effective implementation of the Advisory Committee's recommendations and the provision of regular budget funding for the Programme, to the benefit of developing and developed countries alike. The Group stood ready to work with all Member States in that regard.

41. The Group supported the work of the Programme of Assistance, particularly as it related to the development of international law in Africa. It should be noted that the African Union contributed to the regional course for Africa, and that the African Institute of International Law had recently been established to undertake training and research aimed at progressively developing and codifying international law in the region, furthering the objectives and principles of the African Union and working on the revision of treaties in Africa. Furthermore, it had been decided at the African Union Summit held in May 2013 that African States should support proper funding of the Programme of Assistance, including, if necessary, through the United Nations regular budget. For that reason, *inter alia*, the Group supported continued regular budget funding for the Programme. It was grateful to the Member States that had made voluntary contributions to the Programme of Assistance.

42. **Mr. Escalante Hasbún** (El Salvador), speaking on behalf of the Community of Latin American and

Caribbean States (CELAC), said that, from the early days of their independence, the Latin American and Caribbean States had proclaimed international law as the standard for the conduct of international relations and had incorporated its fundamental principles and norms into their domestic legal systems. The Community considered that knowledge of the substantive rules of international law was a prerequisite for their observance and therefore attached great importance to the teaching, study and dissemination of international law. The fellowships and courses offered through the Programme of Assistance were highly effective platforms in that regard and had a multiplier effect within the community of students and professionals. CELAC was especially pleased that the regional course for Latin America and the Caribbean had been offered in 2018, and it called for sufficient funding to be allocated under the regular budget for 2018–2019 so that all three regional courses could once again be held.

43. He commended the Office of Legal Affairs for maintaining 26 user-friendly websites on international law, which contained valuable resources for researchers. The Audiovisual Library's Lecture Series, Historic Archives and Research Library provided a useful toolbox for the achievement of the Programme's goals and had the potential to reach millions of people worldwide. The Office's publication of the United Nations Legislative Series and the summaries of advisory opinions and judgments of the International Court of Justice and the Permanent Court of International Justice greatly benefited the academic community, as did its efforts to further expand its desktop publishing programme.

44. Since the working languages of the International Court of Justice were English and French, the publication of the summaries and decisions in all the official languages of the United Nations was often the only way for teachers, researchers and students in CELAC countries to familiarize themselves with the Court's jurisprudence and stay abreast of developments in international law. No effort should be spared in updating the collection and ensuring its widest possible dissemination.

45. **Ms. Thompson** (Barbados), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that CARICOM was pleased that in 2018 the Codification Division had been able to hold the International Law Fellowship Programme and convene the three regional courses in international law. It particularly welcomed the fact that representatives of six of its member States had been able to participate in the regional course for Latin America and the Caribbean and that a participant



from Haiti had received one of the fellowships for the International Law Fellowship Programme. It was also pleased to learn that sufficient funding had been made available to maintain the Audiovisual Library in 2018.

46. The fact that the Library has been used by more than 1.6 million users in 193 countries was testimony to its enduring worth to lawyers and academics around the world. CARICOM encouraged the Codification Division to continue its efforts to make the information in the Library available through podcasts, DVDs and other media, including handheld devices. CARICOM also supported the Division's efforts to continue its desktop publishing after a brief hiatus and welcomed the publication of the *International Law Handbook* in two of the six official languages of the United Nations. Those initiatives would contribute to even wider understanding and appreciation of international law.

47. It was the Community's view that the existence of a rules-based multilateral system founded on principles of national and international law and underpinned by a strong development agenda that promoted peace and the protection of the planet would ensure a better life for the majority of the human family. Multilateral treaty-making played an invaluable role in promoting and advancing the rule of law and in maintaining a rules-based international order. In an increasingly complex, globalized and interconnected world, with an ever-growing number of multilateral treaties, it was vital that the Programme of Assistance continued to receive the resources it needed to carry out its mandate. CARICOM therefore supported financing for the Programme within the regular budget and at the same time encouraged States and other juridical persons to make voluntary contributions to the various activities conducted under the Programme. It was grateful to the Member States that had made contributions to the Programme in 2018.

48. Given the developing and evolving nature of international law, it was critical for succeeding generations of Latin American and Caribbean lawyers to be exposed to emerging principles of international law. It was especially important in States where multilateral conventions must be incorporated into domestic law in order to have proper effect and where capacity was insufficient. In view of the role that the Programme would continue to play in promoting implementation of the rule of law at the national and international levels and promoting sovereign equality and friendly cooperation between States, CARICOM remained committed to supporting the work of the Codification Division in implementing the Programme of Assistance. The continued support of all Member States for the Programme would be to the benefit of developed and developing countries alike.

49. **Mr. Ke** (Cambodia), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that the Programme of Assistance played a key role in the Organization's efforts to promote respect for international law worldwide, contributing to the strengthening of international peace and security, promoting peaceful settlement of disputes and enhancing respect for the rule of law at the national and international levels. The International Law Fellowship Programme and the regional courses helped lawyers and teachers of international law, especially those from developing countries, to deepen their knowledge of contemporary legal issues. Moreover, participants often formed close bonds, which helped to foster friendly relations and promote cooperation among nations. The regional courses enabled participants to engage with and learn from their peers, while the Hamilton Shirley Amerasinghe Memorial Fellowship promoted respect for the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, thereby contributing to the peaceful settlement of disputes. The Audiovisual Library, which extended the Programme's reach throughout the world, was one of its most cost-effective and widely accessible tools of knowledge and its use should continue to be expanded.

50. ASEAN was grateful to all Member States that had contributed to the implementation of the Programme, by making financial or in-kind contributions, hosting regional courses or otherwise contributing to the training provided. However, it believed that financing from the regular budget was essential to the sustainable development of the Programme. Whereas reliance on voluntary funding in the past had caused many of the Programme's services to suffer as a result of unpredictable financing, regular budget funding in recent years had allowed the Programme to flourish. ASEAN therefore fully supported the language contained in resolution [72/115](#), in which the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to continue to include resources under the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2020–2021 so as to ensure the effective operation of the Programme of Assistance.

51. *Ms. Kremžar (Slovenia), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

52. **Mr. Chaboureau** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the Programme of Assistance had made a valuable contribution to the rule of law by addressing the need for international law training and dissemination of legal knowledge and

material in benefit of all countries. The seminars offered through the International Law Fellowship Programme played a key role in that regard, helping to build a common legal culture among younger generations. The regional courses, meanwhile, provided an opportunity for participants to focus on legal issues of common interest in their respective regions. The European Union was grateful to the United Nations regional commissions for their work in organizing those courses.

53. The expansion of the Audiovisual Library of International Law had facilitated access to a vast range of legal resources in several languages, at relatively low cost. The Library remained an important resource for the legal community and warranted continued attention by the Codification Division. The European Union commended the Division's efforts to make the lectures in the Lecture Series available as podcasts and to disseminate other legal information and publications via the Internet. It welcomed the publication of the French-language version of the *International Law Handbook* and congratulated the Division for its desktop publishing activities in 2018. It was to be hoped that sufficient resources would be available in 2019 to enable the Division to continue those activities.

54. The European Union recognized the contribution of the Hamilton Shirley Amerasinghe Memorial Fellowship on the Law of the Sea to the wider appreciation and application of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and wished to acknowledge the work of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea in that regard. It commended those States that had provided voluntary contributions to support the regional courses, the Fellowship and the other activities of the Programme of Assistance and encouraged all States to consider making more frequent or larger contributions in the future. It also thanked the various entities that had offered reduced tuition rates or logistical support in 2018.

55. **Ms. Nyrhinen** (Finland), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), said that an effective rules-based international order depended largely on the professionalism and commitment of people acting on behalf of States. Through the Programme of Assistance, generations of government lawyers, judges and diplomats from around the globe had been able to gain a deeper understanding of international law in the current interconnected world, which had benefited the international community as a whole. Since 1965, the Programme, including the International Law Fellowship Programme and the regional courses, had made a remarkable contribution to achieving the goals of the United Nations by providing scholars and practitioners

with access to international law training and other resources on international law. The Nordic countries commended the continued engagement of the Codification Division in pursuing its mandate regarding the Programme of Assistance.

56. The Audiovisual Library was an invaluable resource that continued to bring high-quality training free of charge to an unlimited number of individuals and institutions around the globe. The Nordic countries welcomed the efforts of the Codification Division to expedite the issuance of some of its legal publications. They also welcomed the provision of resources for the Programme from the regular budget. The Nordic countries would continue to examine in a positive light requests for Member States to make voluntary contributions to the Programme. They commended those Member States that had made such voluntary contributions and encouraged all States to consider doing so in order to sustain the continued operations of the Programme.

57. **Mr. Luna** (Brazil) said that the Programme of Assistance embodied the notion that peace could be achieved through law. The Programme's fellowships and courses had helped to educate successive generations of lawyers for more than five decades. His delegation was pleased to note that it had been possible to hold all three regional courses in 2018 and was grateful to the host countries and to the Secretariat for organizing them. The inclusion of funding for the three regional courses in the Organization's regular budget for the current biennium was a significant achievement. There was an increasing demand for such courses, and it was therefore crucial that they be funded at the same level in future bienniums. His delegation also welcomed the Secretariat's efforts to continue to seek voluntary contributions for the regional courses; it was important to ensure that such contributions were used to provide additional fellowships beyond those covered by the regular budget, so as to respond to the steadily increasing demand.

58. His delegation welcomed the efforts to improve access to the Audiovisual Library in regions with limited access to high-speed Internet and to ensure broader geographical and linguistic representation among lecturers. It wished to stress, however, that hard copies remained valuable to persons who lacked affordable access to the Internet. The necessary resources should be provided to enable the Codification Division to resume desktop publishing and avoid backlogs. Indeed, adequate resources needed to be ensured for all activities under the Programme of Assistance, as they had been for the regional courses.

59. **Mr. Colaço Pinto Machado** (Portugal) said that for 53 years the Programme of Assistance had played a key role in the teaching, study, dissemination and wider appreciation of international law as a well-established means of strengthening international peace and security and promoting friendly relations and cooperation among States. That role was as crucial now as it had been in 1965. In the current globalized era, when there was a greater need than ever for knowledge of international law, including the in-depth study and research of new issues, the increasing demand for training in the field was a good sign. His delegation commended the International Law Fellowship Programme for providing comprehensive high-quality instruction by leading scholars and practitioners on a broad range of core subjects of international law.

60. It also commended the good work of the Office of Legal Affairs in conducting research, collecting legal materials, facilitating electronic research and organizing the regional courses in international law, and it applauded the Office's successful efforts to make the courses efficient from an administrative and financial perspective. There continued to be a perception that both the courses and the Programme itself were not sufficiently well known, however, and his delegation called on States to promote the Programme in their universities and civil services.

61. The Audiovisual Library provided quality online training globally at relatively low cost and was an important tool for the study and dissemination of international law. Nevertheless, users in some developing countries continued to experience Internet access difficulties, which limited their access to the materials in the Library. The Codification Division was to be commended for its efforts to make video materials more readily available by converting them to podcasts. His delegation was pleased that the resumed desktop publishing initiatives remained active and applauded the progress made in that regard. There was still work to be done, however, to strengthen the Programme of Assistance and ensure that it met the needs of beneficiaries, including with respect to language. Funding would remain a challenge. While the allocation of funds under the regular budget was welcome, those funds were not sufficient to cover all of the Programme's needs. It might therefore be useful to explore new and creative funding mechanisms, such as the establishment of partnerships with non-governmental organizations, universities, research institutes or even law firms. As a member of the Advisory Committee, Portugal reaffirmed its commitment to continue working towards a more just

and peaceful world through the promotion and dissemination of international law.

62. **Mr. Elsadig Ali Sayed Ahmed** (Sudan) said that his Government attached great importance to the Programme of Assistance, which contributed to peace and security, friendly relations among peoples and the peaceful settlement of disputes. The Programme had increased understanding of the purposes and principles of international law among scholars, jurists and diplomats and assisted countries in harmonizing their domestic legislation with international law; it was one of the most important components of United Nations rule of law activities.

63. The International Law Fellowship Programme enabled participants from developing and emerging countries to receive training from highly qualified instructors representing different legal systems in various parts of the world. The regional courses were also an important mechanism for expanding opportunities for training in international law. It was to be hoped that additional financing could be mobilized for the Fellowship Programme so that a greater number of participants from developing countries could take part in the regional courses. His delegation was grateful for the support provided by the African Union and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa for the regional course for Africa. The Audiovisual Library was another valuable resource that must be supported, in particular so that the materials in the library could be made available to users with limited Internet access.

64. The Advisory Committee, of which the Sudan was a member, had held fruitful and constructive discussions at its current session. His delegation hoped that the Sixth Committee would accept its recommendations and that Member States would continue to support the Programme so that it could continue to fulfil its pioneering role.

65. **Mr. Carrillo Gómez** (Paraguay) said that the Constitution of Paraguay recognized international law, the principles of which governed its international relations. The Programme of Assistance had contributed to capacity-building in the area of international law in Paraguay, as well as to the development of regional international law in the Americas, thus helping to strengthen international peace and security and to promote friendly relations and cooperation between States. Moreover, participants from Paraguay, who had taken part in the regional courses for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Public International Law Summer Course of The Hague Academy of International Law had gone on to hold government and diplomatic posts, including in the Permanent Mission of Paraguay to the

United Nations. They had also formed professional networks that afforded opportunities for interaction between academics, professionals and government officials working in the area of international law. The Programme of Assistance thus had valuable practical and multiplier effects. The multiplier effect could be enhanced if the full content of the Audiovisual Library was made available in Spanish.

66. His delegation supported the allocation of funding under the 2018–2019 regular budget to enable the Programme to hold all the regional courses. It also supported regular budget funding for the International Law Fellowship Programme and called for those resources to be used to encourage the participation of nationals from countries with limited prior representation in the courses. His delegation invited Member States to continue or increase their voluntary contributions to the Programme and encouraged universities, foundations and other entities also to consider making contributions.

67. **Mr. Park Chull-Joo** (Republic of Korea) said that the Programme of Assistance had played an essential role in promoting the rule of law at the national, regional and international levels. The regional courses had provided training opportunities for participants from developing countries to study contemporary issues of international law of common interest to their regions, and they contributed greatly to capacity-building, knowledge-sharing and increased understanding and cooperation among States. His Government was engaged in its own efforts to promote training in international law, including through the Seoul Academy of International Law programme, which provided training on a broad range of international law topics. Some 150 diplomats, public servants, legal experts and graduate students from more than 20 Asia-Pacific countries had benefited thus far from the programme. The Government also offered an annual award for the best thesis in the field of international law and provided information to the general public on important developments in that field.

68. His delegation noted with appreciation the hard work of the Codification Division on the Audiovisual Library in the 10 years since the Library's launch. The Library had provided high-quality training to countless individuals and institutions around the world, free of charge via the Internet. The completion of the work to make all lectures in the Lecture Series available as podcasts had facilitated access to the Library in regions where high-speed Internet access was limited. His delegation expected the Library to continue to serve as a vital source for the dissemination of knowledge about international law and encouraged prominent law

scholars to participate actively in the Library's activities.

69. **Ms. López Marcochio** (Mexico), speaking as a youth delegate, said that her delegation recognized the enormous value of the Programme of Assistance in promoting the rule of law at the national and international levels and contributing to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 16. The dissemination of international law was a foreign policy priority of her Government. Since 1993, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mexico had been offering an annual international law workshop with the aim of disseminating and promoting greater understanding of international norms and standards. The workshops were offered free of charge, in different states of Mexico, and were open to the general public as well as to academics and students. The twenty-fifth such workshop, held in August 2018, had delved into a broad range of the most contemporary issues and challenges in international law. For the first time, the workshop had been videocast on the Internet, which had made it accessible all over the country.

70. Her delegation appreciated the work of the Office of Legal Affairs in the promotion and dissemination of international law and recognized the importance of the regional courses for Latin America and the Caribbean, in which Mexican nationals had participated. It also recognized the important work of the Codification Division in compiling and disseminating the practice of various legal bodies and acknowledged the usefulness of the Audiovisual Library in providing quality training online to an unlimited number of individuals around the world. Lastly, her delegation wished to highlight the importance of promoting the dissemination of documents on international law issues in all six official languages of the Organization, and particularly in Spanish, which was spoken as a mother tongue by more than 480 million people worldwide.

71. **Ms. Andamo** (Thailand) said that the provision of fellowships to candidates from developing countries and the organization of study visits and regional courses and seminars had all helped to increase the knowledge and expertise of practitioners of international law around the world. The increased use of technology for the Audiovisual Library, including the podcasts of the lectures in the Lecture Series, had made a significant contribution to the wider dissemination of international law. Her delegation encouraged all parties to continue promoting further such improvements in the coming years.

72. The Programme of Assistance was a means of strengthening international peace and security and

promoting friendly relations and cooperation among Member States. Her Government was strongly committed to supporting the Programme, including financially. It was honoured to host the 2018 regional course in international law for Asia-Pacific and stood ready to continue hosting future courses. She hoped that more women would be able to participate in the courses. Sustained and predictable funding was critical for the effective implementation of the Programme of Assistance; in that regard, Member States had a collective responsibility to ensure that the Programme was adequately funded.

73. **Mr. Hitti** (Lebanon) said that the Programme of Assistance had benefited generations of jurists, diplomats and students from developing and developed countries alike, thus building capacity and contributing to respect for international law and promotion of the rule of law. The International Law Fellowship Programme and the regional courses remained essential for the dissemination of international law and also served as a valuable platform for exchange and networking among participants. The number of applicants was evidence of the success of the courses and the growing demand for them. Participants' surveys conducted at the end of the courses could be useful in helping to identify emerging areas of law that might be covered in future courses. His delegation encouraged further diversity in the selection of lecturers; in particular, it would like to see more lecturers from law schools in Arab countries.

74. His delegation noted with appreciation the addition of 50 new lectures to the Lecture Series of the Audiovisual Library. The podcast project launched in 2017 had helped to bridge the accessibility gap for users from developing countries, and outreach to public and private institutions could be strengthened to enhance access to Library materials. For example, the lectures might be made available through the websites or social media outlets of law schools. His delegation welcomed the publication of the French-language version of the *International Law Handbook* and stressed the importance of making resources available so that it could be translated into the other four official languages. It was pleased to learn that the *Handbook* would be disseminated to universities in developing countries. His delegation appreciated the work of the Codification Division in helping to implement the Programme of Assistance and thanked the host countries and the regional commissions for their support of the regional courses. His delegation joined others in calling for sustained and adequate funding for the Programme.

75. **Mr. Bukoree** (Mauritius) said that the Programme's 53 years of existence and the growing interest in its training courses and information resources

were a testament to its importance. Training in international law did not necessarily have to be imparted in universities. His delegation strongly supported the dissemination of programmes and training materials on international law through the Internet and other media and considered the Audiovisual Library to be a valuable resource. Member States should be encouraged to use the Library more regularly. It would be useful for the Programme to organize short-term training courses specifically for diplomats. Many of the participants in its current programmes and courses did not come from ministries of foreign affairs, in part because in some countries the ministry of foreign affairs did not have its own legal department. Diplomats from the ministry of foreign affairs gained practical experience in international law through their work, but they did not necessarily have a legal background, and they could therefore benefit from courses that would enable them to acquire a basic knowledge of international law.

*The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.*