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Thirty-eighth session
Agenda item 24CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE
ASIAN-AFRICAN LEGAL CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEEReport of the Secretary-General

1. The present report on the state of the co-operation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee (AALCC) is prepared pursuant to paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 37/8 of 29 October 1982.
2. It may be recalled that, at its thirty-fifth session, the General Assembly, by resolution 35/2 of 13 October 1980, accorded permanent observer status to the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee and invited it to participate in the sessions and work of the Assembly in the capacity of observer. In February 1981, AALCC established a permanent observer mission to the United Nations.
3. At the thirty-sixth session, the General Assembly, on the occasion of the commemoration of the Committee's twenty-fifth anniversary and in recognition of its highly commendable work in promoting interregional and international co-operation supportive of the efforts of the United Nations, adopted resolution 36/38 of 18 November 1981 by which it requested the Secretary-General of the United Nations to carry out consultations with the Secretary-General of AALCC with a view to further strengthening the co-operation between the two organizations and widening its scope and decided to include in the provisional agenda of its thirty-seventh session an item entitled "Co-operation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee".
4. At the thirty-seventh session, the General Assembly, in its resolution 37/8, noted with deep satisfaction the ongoing and effective co-operation between the organizations particularly in the field of progressive development and codification of international law, and requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its present session on the state of co-operation between the United Nations and AALCC.

5. During the period under review and pursuant to the established practice, consultations have been conducted between AALCC, the Office of Legal Affairs and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Law of the Sea on the subject of representation at meetings and sessions, exchange of documentation and information, and co-ordination of work programmes. A useful framework has therefore been established.

6. Over the years, AALCC as a major forum for Asian-African consultation and co-operation in the legal field has actively participated in such important United Nations conferences as those dealing with diplomatic relations, the law of treaties, state succession and international sale of goods. During these conferences AALCC acted as a focal point for the exchange of views and the consolidation of positions of the Asian and African States on issues of common interests. To achieve these objectives, AALCC organized meetings, prepared background material, analysed issues, invoked and recommended approaches to be adopted. AALCC continues to take part in such activities and maintains close relations with the various bodies and organs of the United Nations and the specialized agencies, in particular, the International Law Commission, the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Maritime Organization. The regional centres established at Kuala Lumpur and Cairo for the settlement of disputes in economic and commercial matters applies UNCITRAL Arbitration Rules for the settlement of disputes. The view was expressed by the representative of AALCC at the nineteenth session of UNCITRAL that the Commission should study the implications of the new international economic order for international trade that led to the very practical work on industrial contracts now undertaken by UNCITRAL.

7. The Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee is ready to contribute in a meaningful way to the work of the United Nations, more particularly in the legal field as well as in areas where economic and legal issues are closely interrelated. AALCC has offered to make available its good offices in giving publicity to the work of the United Nations in the field of progressive development of international law and in assisting in the implementation of the new international economic order and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and as appropriate, to encourage its member Governments to ratify or accede to United Nations treaties and conventions in those fields. AALCC will also make arrangements for consultations among its member Governments with a view to co-operating with the United Nations in preparing background papers, and organizing training programmes and seminars on the above-mentioned subjects. A work programme in this regard has been prepared on the basis of discussions which took place at the Committee's recent session in Tokyo.

8. The Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee continues to focus on the law of the sea and, since the adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, has addressed the legal situation that emerges as a consequence of its adoption and the steps that are necessary to ensure its early entry into force and its universal acceptance. In this regard, there has been close co-operation with the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Law of the Sea. AALCC has continued its effort in recommending to its member States the

adoption of a positive attitude towards the Convention. The future work outlined by AALCC envisages measures: for the promotion of ratification of the Convention by focussing its attention on matters which are of importance to Governments and by bringing out the advantages that would accrue from their being parties to the Convention; assistance through the exchange of information; advice concerning the effect of provisions of the Convention; the preparation of studies on important issues arising from the Convention; and the provision of assistance in their participation in the work of the Preparatory Commission for the International Sea-Bed Authority and for the International Tribunal of the Law of the Sea. To this end, consultations have been carried out between the Secretary-General of AALCC and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Law of the Sea, and close co-operation continues.
