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Chair: Ms. Anderberg (Vice-Chair) (Sweden)

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In the absence of Mr. Mlynár (Slovakia), Ms. Anderberg (Sweden), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 78: United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law (A/74/496)

1. **Ms. Pobe** (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-fourth session on 8 October 2019 to consider the report of the Secretary-General (A/74/496). It had also reviewed the activities undertaken during the reporting period and the activities proposed for 2020, including the resulting administrative and financial implications.

2. It was evident that the Programme of Assistance remained relevant. The large number of applications received for the International Law Fellowship Programme and the regional courses in international law attested to the need for training and 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 2019. She wished to express appreciation to the Member States that had hosted the courses. She was also grateful to the United Nations regional commissions for their continued support.

3. The United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law was a unique element of the Programme of Assistance. It 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. She welcomed the Secretariat's efforts to ensure broader geographical and linguistic representation and achieve gender parity by increasing the number of female participants and lecturers.

4. As had been consistently recognized by the General Assembly, the Programme of Assistance was a

core activity of the United Nations that helped 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 of the United Nations. She thanked the members of the Advisory Committee for their continued commitment to the Programme. Member States had provided constructive advice on such issues as the dissemination of training materials and the accessibility of the Audiovisual Library. She was also grateful to the Codification Division of the Office of Legal Affairs for its dedication to the effective implementation of the Programme.

5. **Ms. Elbaz** (Office of Legal Affairs), speaking in her capacity as Secretary of the Advisory Committee, said that the number of applications for the courses organized under the Programme of Assistance had almost doubled since the previous biennium. The resources provided under the regular budget had enabled the Codification Division to organize four training programmes mandated by the General Assembly: 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. Of the 97 participants selected, a total of 82, from 77 Member States, had received fellowships covering all their expenses, while a further 15 had attended on a self-funded basis. Gender parity had been achieved among the participants, and efforts had been made to improve geographical representation and gender parity among the lecturers. She thanked the International Court of Justice, the United Nations regional commissions and the host countries, Chile, Ethiopia, the Netherlands and Thailand, for their support.

6. In its resolution [73/201](#), the General Assembly had encouraged the Secretary-General to support the establishment of alumni networks of participants of the training programmes organized under the Programme of Assistance. To that end, the Codification Division had compiled a list of former participants and contacted them to ascertain their interest in participating in such networks.

7. Only a limited number of lawyers could participate in training programmes mandated by the General Assembly; 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 had been accessed by more than 1.9 million users in all 193 Member States. During the reporting period, 45 new lectures had been added to the Library. An increasing number of the lecturers were women, and the linguistic and geographical diversity of

the available content had been broadened, in part thanks to two off-site recording sessions undertaken in Latin America and the Russian Federation to record lecturers who did not travel regularly to New York.

8. The Audiovisual Library had also been made more accessible. As of 2018, all lectures were available in audio format and could be downloaded and listened to as podcasts. To further facilitate access, a tutorial video had been added to the main page of the Audiovisual Library website explaining how to use the audio features. To date, audio files had been downloaded over 90,000 times.

9. 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.

10. **Mr. Jares** (Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea) said that the General Assembly, in its resolution [73/124](#), 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. Since its establishment in 1981, the Fellowship had been awarded to 33 individuals, of whom 15 were women and 18 were men, from 30 developing countries. Those professionals were now making important contributions in their respective countries and regions.

11. 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, 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.

12. It was critical that the necessary funding be made available so that the Fellowship could continue to be awarded. He recalled 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. The current fund

balance was only sufficient to cover one standard award. He wished to thank those Member States that had made voluntary contributions to support the Fellowship and urged States and other relevant stakeholders to continue to make contributions so that a full award could be granted in 2020 and beyond.

13. **Mr. Abdelaziz** (Egypt), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that better knowledge of international law was a means of strengthening international peace and security and promoting friendly relations and cooperation among States. The Group noted with appreciation the various activities undertaken under the Programme of Assistance, which played a critical role in disseminating knowledge of international law and building capacity, particularly in Africa. Indeed, one third of the applicants for the 2019 International Law Fellowship Programme had been from Africa.

14. The Group attached great importance to the regional course in international law for Africa, which took place annually at the headquarters of the Economic Commission for Africa. He welcomed the efforts of the Codification Division to compile a list of former participants with a view to establishing alumni networks. The creation of a community of international law professionals would help to achieve the overarching objectives of the Programme of Assistance.

15. Predictable funding was critical for the effective implementation of the Programme. He encouraged all Member States to support the provision of resources for the Programme from the regular budget and commended those States that had made voluntary or in-kind contributions. The Secretariat should continue to publicize the Programme and periodically invite stakeholders to make voluntary contributions, with a view to improving funding predictability and expanding the activities of the Programme.

16. **Mr. Bamyia** (Observer for the State of Palestine), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Programme of Assistance was an effective tool for disseminating 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.

17. The Group welcomed the allocation under the regular budget of the necessary resources for the Programme. Regular budget funding was critical and would help to ensure the continuation of the

Programme's activities in coming years. At the same time, voluntary contributions, including in-kind contributions, remained essential.

18. 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 that the Codification Division was undertaking off-site recording sessions 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 facilitated access to lectures for users without reliable high-speed Internet.

19. 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, organizations and State institutions 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 encouraged the Secretariat to continue to raise awareness of the Programme and the resources available.

20. **Mr. Ke** (Cambodia), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that ASEAN attached great importance to the promotion of international law through the Programme of Assistance. The Programme played an important role in promoting a rules-based multilateral system, strengthening international peace and security, advancing friendly relations among nations and promoting the rule of law. By building capacity at the national, regional and international levels, the Programme was contributing to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 16.

21. The Programme was vital for the dissemination of international law globally and gave scholars and practitioners around the world valuable access to training materials and resources. ASEAN welcomed the holding of the regional courses in international law and the International Law Fellowship Programme, which enabled participants to share experiences and ideas, thereby improving intercultural understanding and dialogue. In addition, the Hamilton Shirley Amerasinghe Memorial Fellowship on the Law of the Sea promoted better understanding of the United

Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which contributed to the peaceful settlement of disputes through negotiation and compromise. ASEAN welcomed the use of advanced technology to disseminate information to academics, practitioners and the general public. The Audiovisual Library was a cost-effective and accessible resource for the dissemination of legal knowledge. ASEAN was pleased that new lectures had been added to the Library in 2019.

22. Regular budget funding was critical to ensuring the continuation of the activities of the Programme of Assistance, including the regional courses. ASEAN would continue to advocate the provision of resources for the Programme from the regular budget and to encourage States to make voluntary contributions.

23. **Mr. Chaboureau** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Turkey; 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 an effective contribution to the rule of law by addressing the need for international law training and dissemination of legal knowledge and material in various languages in benefit of all countries. The seminars offered through the International Law Fellowship Programme and the regional courses in international law played a key role in that regard, helping to build a common legal culture among young professionals. The European Union was grateful to the United Nations regional commissions for their work in organizing those courses.

24. The expansion of the Audiovisual Library 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 improve access to the Library by making lectures available as podcasts, improving linguistic representation and disseminating legal information and publications via the Internet. It also welcomed efforts to enhance the section of the Library relating to moot court competitions held in academic institutions; such competitions connected students with fellow future practitioners from around the world and provided an opportunity to discuss current issues of international law. The Division should continue to expand the resources available and develop the website of the Library, with a view to enhancing gender parity and geographical and linguistic diversity.

25. The European Union congratulated the Division for its desktop publishing activities in 2019 and welcomed the publication of the *United Nations Juridical Yearbook*, the *Summaries of Judgments*, *Advisory Opinions and Orders of the International Court of Justice*, and *Reports of International Arbitral Awards*. It hoped that sufficient resources would be available in 2020 to enable the Division to continue those activities.

26. Given 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, its financial position should be improved. The European Union commended those States that had provided voluntary contributions to support the 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.

27. **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 of Assistance, 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.

28. 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 facilitate access to lectures for users without reliable Internet through the launch of lectures in audio format as podcasts.

29. The Nordic countries welcomed the provision of resources for the Programme of Assistance from the regular budget, as that would ensure the continuation of the Programme's activities. 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 contributions and encouraged all States to consider doing so in order to sustain the continued operations of the Programme.

30. **Mr. Bukoree** (Mauritius) said that his delegation appreciated the work of the Codification Division in helping to implement the Programme of Assistance. The growing interest in the International Law Fellowship Programme and the regional courses was a testament to the importance of the Programme. Mauritius also welcomed the Division's efforts to issue relevant publications, develop the Audiovisual Library and improve the Programme's website.

31. His delegation was pleased that diplomats with non-legal backgrounds were increasingly applying to take part in the various training courses offered by the Programme and that the call for applications had been broadened to allow staff from various government departments, educational institutions and the permanent missions to apply. It also welcomed the establishment of alumni networks of participants.

32. In the future, the call for applications should open in early August and the deadline for submitting applications should be early November. The current application period of 5–6 weeks was not sufficient for the permanent missions to disseminate the call for applications to all interested parties.

33. Starting from primary school, children should be taught about international law, environmental law and climate change, through subjects such as geography, history and civic education. The United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization could contribute to disseminating international law by developing age-appropriate pedagogical materials to that end.

34. **Mr. Nagy** (Slovakia) said that his delegation strongly supported the Programme of Assistance, including the International Law Fellowship Programme and the regional courses, which had contributed to the broadening of knowledge on international law and the strengthening of the rule of law. The Audiovisual Library had made legal publications and lectures readily accessible throughout the world and served as an important resource for legal practitioners and academics. For that reason, Slovakia had made a voluntary financial contribution to the Programme with a focus on the Library, which warranted continued attention and resources, and should be further developed and expanded. Slovakia commended the efforts of the

Codification Division to implement the Programme of Assistance.

35. **Ms. Chung** (Singapore) said that, as a small State whose survival and success depended on the existence of a rules-based multilateral system, Singapore strongly identified with the goals and purposes of the Programme of Assistance. The dissemination and wider appreciation of international law through capacity-building and information-sharing were keys to ensuring a rules-based international order.

36. Her delegation welcomed the various activities carried out by the Codification Division to promote international law, including the International Law Fellowship Programme and the regional course in international law for Asia-Pacific. Those activities had been led by highly qualified international law scholars and practitioners, who had provided comprehensive training. She hoped that the Division would continue to seek opportunities to collaborate with countries and institutions in different regions.

37. Singapore commended the Division's efforts to expand the Audiovisual Library, including by recording new lectures. Her delegation was pleased that the Division had undertaken off-site recording sessions with a view to promoting broader geographical representation. The Library, which offered easy access to a vast range of legal documents and training materials, was a valuable resource for the international community that the Division should continue to develop.

38. In 2019, her Government had held a five-day course on international trade law for government officials. The course had included an introduction to key legal instruments, including those of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law. Also in 2019, the Centre for International Law at the National University of Singapore had held the second edition of the ASEAN Law Academy, which was intended to deepen participants' understanding of the institutions of ASEAN and the Association's economic integration, foreign affairs and legal frameworks.

39. **Mr. Xu Chi** (China) said that, since its inception, the Programme of Assistance had supported the teaching, study and application of international law and played a crucial role in capacity-building, in particular in developing countries. The International Law Fellowship Programme and the regional courses provided training opportunities for professionals from developing countries and emerging economies. China was pleased that the candidates selected to participate in those programmes represented a broad geographical spread and that a gender balance had been achieved. His

delegation welcomed the continued expansion of the Audiovisual Library, which played an important role in promoting the dissemination, teaching and study of international law. China also supported the Codification Division's desktop publishing activities and welcomed the issuance of a number of publications during the reporting period.

40. China attached great importance to the teaching and study of international law and had always actively supported the Programme of Assistance, including through the provision of financial support. In 2019, his Government had contributed \$30,000 to the Programme. China had also contributed directly to capacity-building in international law in Asian and African countries through cooperative projects. In 2019, the fifth Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization training programme had provided training for more than 40 officials from Asia and Africa. More recently, his Government had held a workshop on cooperation and the rule of law for officials from over 20 countries. China stood ready to cooperate with other parties to continue to support the Programme of Assistance, contribute to the teaching, study and dissemination of international law and enhance capacity-building in developing countries.

41. **Mr. Vaultier Mathias** (Portugal) said that knowledge of international law was a basic prerequisite for establishing the conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law could be maintained. The Programme of Assistance was 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 in-depth knowledge of new issues, the increasing demand for international law training and resources was a good sign. His delegation commended the International Law Fellowship Programme for providing comprehensive, high-quality instruction on a broad range of core subjects of international law to legal professionals from around the world, including developing countries.

42. It also commended the outstanding 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. The courses played a key role in disseminating international law and Portugal was grateful to the regional commissions for hosting them. However, both the courses and the

Programme itself were not sufficiently well known, particularly among students and young scholars. States should promote the Programme in their universities and civil services.

43. The Audiovisual Library provided high-quality online training globally and at relatively low cost and was an important tool for the study and dissemination of international law. His delegation welcomed the Codification Division's efforts to facilitate access to the Library's resources for users without reliable Internet access, for instance by producing audio versions of lectures that could be downloaded as podcasts. The Division should continue to increase linguistic diversity by adding lectures and resources in languages other than the six official languages of the United Nations, including Portuguese, which was one of the most widely spoken languages in the world.

44. There was still work to be done 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. His delegation was pleased that the General Assembly had included funding for the Programme in the regular budget. In addition, it might be useful to explore new and creative funding mechanisms, such as the establishment of partnerships with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), universities, research institutes or law firms.

45. **Mr. Hitti** (Lebanon) said that the dissemination and teaching of international law played an invaluable role in maintaining a rules-based international order in which fundamental freedoms were protected. His delegation strongly supported, therefore, the Programme of Assistance. There was growing interest in courses offered under the Programme, as evidenced by the steadily increasing number of applications received for the International Law Fellowship Programme and the regional courses in international law. His delegation supported continued regular budget funding for the Programme and was grateful to those Member States that had made voluntary contributions, including in-kind contributions.

46. His delegation welcomed the efforts made to achieve gender parity and improve linguistic and geographical representation among lecturers and participants. It supported the establishment of alumni networks, which would strengthen ties among former participants. It was also pleased that the Codification Division was exploring opportunities with other institutions organizing moot court competitions; such activities provided a valuable opportunity for participants to deepen their understanding of the law.

47. His delegation welcomed the Division's efforts to facilitate access to the resources of the Programme for users in developing countries, including through the podcast project. Since their launch, the audio lectures had been downloaded over 90,000 times.

48. **Ms. Elgindi** (Sudan) said that her delegation attached great importance to the Programme of Assistance, which was one of the major tools used by the United Nations in its efforts to strengthen the rule of law. It commended the Codification Division on its valuable assistance in the implementation of the Programme, particularly in connection with the International Law Fellowship Programme, the regional courses in international law and the wider dissemination of international law, especially in developing countries. The Programme of Assistance had clearly helped to raise awareness of the principles and purposes of international law among students, lawyers and diplomats, and had helped Member States harmonize their national laws with the principles and provisions of international law. The United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law played an important role in disseminating such law and providing training programmes that benefited institutions and individuals.

49. Her delegation thanked the Codification Division and the regional organizations that had hosted the regional courses. It was particularly grateful to the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Union for helping to organize the regional course for Africa. More financial resources should be allocated to the Programme so that the regional courses could continue, given the high quality of the training, which was provided by senior scholars and practitioners on a broad range of core topics of international law and specific matters of interest to the countries of the respective regions. The interactive nature of the training allowed the participants to share experiences and ideas, thus promoting understanding and cooperation in legal matters in the various regions. Her delegation commended the States that had been providing financial support to the Programme. More support should be given to the African Institute of International Law so that it could play a larger role in the conduct of studies and research that would enhance the contribution of African lawyers to the development of international law.

50. The deliberations of the Advisory Committee at its fifty-fourth session had been constructive, and the positive spirit of the delegations had resulted in recommendations after lengthy discussions. The flexibility shown by members had played a role in achieving that breakthrough. Her delegation had engaged with other members to reinvigorate and strengthen the Programme and meet the challenges

facing it, in particular at the financial level, and looked forward to the adoption of the recommendations by the members of the Sixth Committee. The Programme must continue so that the desired goals were achieved; her delegation called on all Member States to give the Programme due importance so that it could continue to play its leading role in the dissemination and teaching of international law.

51. **Mr. Park Chull-Joo** (Republic of Korea) said that the Programme of Assistance had been instrumental in promoting the rule of law at the national, regional and international levels. The International Law Fellowship Programme and the regional courses had contributed greatly to capacity-building, particularly in developing countries, by enhancing participants' knowledge of contemporary issues of international law. His delegation welcomed the establishment of alumni networks.

52. His delegation was pleased to learn that the website of the Audiovisual Library had been accessed by a significant number of new users following the launch of lectures in audio format as podcasts in 2018. The delegation also appreciated the efforts of the Codification Division to further facilitate access to the Library's resources, for instance by adding a tutorial video explaining how to use the audio features. His delegation expected the Library to continue to serve as a vital source for the dissemination of knowledge about international law.

53. His Government was engaged in its own efforts to promote the dissemination of international law, including through the Seoul Academy of International Law programme, which provided training on a broad range of international law topics. Every year, some 30 diplomats and government officials from Asia-Pacific countries benefited from the two-week programme. The Government also held moot court competitions, offered an annual award for the best thesis in the field of international law and held town hall meetings for the general public. In addition, the Yeosu Academy of the Law of the Sea provided capacity-building training for individuals from developing countries. The 2019 International Conference on the Law of the Sea, held in the Republic of Korea, had helped to raise domestic awareness of international maritime law.

54. **Mr. Singto** (Thailand) said that the Programme of Assistance had played a vital role in fostering a deeper understanding of international law, thereby strengthening international peace and security, supporting the rule of law at all levels, fostering friendly relations among States and advancing efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

55. The Audiovisual Library provided unlimited access to knowledge and information for government officials and the general public. His delegation was pleased that the Codification Division was making use of information and communications technology to further facilitate access to the Library, including through the podcast project, and hoped to see additional improvements in the future. For instance, the Division could conduct off-site recordings of lectures in other languages and update the content of the regional course for Asia-Pacific.

56. Thailand had hosted the regional course seven times and looked forward to continuing to host it regularly in the future. The regional courses gave participants from a variety of professional backgrounds, including academia, the opportunity to improve their understanding of international law and receive legal training from highly qualified international law scholars and practitioners on a broad range of topics. The courses helped to enhance the global dissemination of international law to other professions and the general public.

57. Regular and adequate funding was crucial for the effective implementation of the Programme of Assistance. It was the collective responsibility of all States to ensure the Programme's smooth and continued operation.

58. **Ms. Kebe** (Sierra Leone) said that her delegation welcomed the opportunities for capacity-building and training offered by the Programme of Assistance, as they enabled States to take an informed approach to emerging issues. The Programme had contributed to promoting the rule of law by addressing the dire need for training and providing access to legal knowledge and resources for legal practitioners around the world. Her delegation was pleased that nationals of Sierra Leone had been selected to participate in the regional course for Africa and in the International Law Fellowship Programme. It acknowledged that the Hamilton Shirley Amerasinghe Memorial Fellowship on the Law of the Sea contributed to the wider appreciation and implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and urged all Member States to support and make voluntary contributions to the Fellowship.

59. Her delegation welcomed the focus on gender parity in the selection of participants for both the regional courses and the International Law Fellowship Programme. Sierra Leone welcomed the efficiencies arising from the partnership between the Codification Division and the regional commissions which hosted the regional courses, and commended those commissions for their contributions and cost reduction mechanisms.

Her delegation also welcomed the establishment of alumni networks; such networks would enable former participants to connect and network, share experiences and discuss the positive impact of the Programme on their professional lives.

60. The Programme must be financed in a sustainable manner. Sierra Leone encouraged all Member States with the means to do so to make voluntary contributions to the Programme, and commended those States that had already done so.

61. **Mr. Furdora** (Cuba) said that the Programme of Assistance greatly contributed to the promotion of the rule of law at the national and international levels and fostered a deeper understanding of the substantive norms of international law, which was necessary for improving compliance with such norms; the Programme should therefore remain on the agenda of the General Assembly, although progress with regard to codification, one of the principal sources of international law, was too slow. The Programme also promoted the purposes and principles of the Charter, in particular international peace and security and friendly relations and cooperation among States.

62. Funding should be provided for experts from small and developing countries to take part in the courses and fellowships offered through the Programme. In the case of Cuba, the economic, commercial and financial embargo that had been imposed against it by the United States for almost 60 years and that had been brutally tightened in recent months was the main obstacle to participation. The activities under the Programme should therefore be funded from the regular budget.

63. **Mr. Rugeles** (Colombia) said that, pursuant to the Charter, international law was a tool for ensuring international peace and security and friendly relations among States, and its fundamental principles had therefore been incorporated into Colombian law under the country's Constitution. The long-standing compliance of Colombia with international law was reflected in the country's excellent relations with other States and its reliability in complying with the agreements to which it was a party. Understanding of and respect for international law were essential to States' progress, and, in the case of Colombia, the application of such law was of particular importance because relations with other States and international organizations were keys to development and mutual respect.

64. His delegation acknowledged the role of the Codification Division in implementing the Programme of Assistance through various activities that fostered the study of international law, such as the International Law

Fellowship Programme, the regional courses in international law and the Audiovisual Library. It thanked the Division for its support of the regional course in international law for Latin America and the Caribbean, held at the headquarters of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean in Santiago. The Colombian jurists who had received fellowships and had participated in the course would be able to help in the strengthening of national capacities and in the training of professionals in the area.

65. More Spanish-language publications should be made available through the Audiovisual Library, since Spanish was an official language of the United Nations and one of the most widely spoken languages in the world.

66. **Ms. Pierce** (United States of America) said that knowledge of international law was key to furthering the rule of law at all levels. The Programme of Assistance continued to make an indispensable contribution to the education of students and practitioners of international law and merited ongoing strong support. As a member of the Advisory Committee, the United States had been pleased by the Programme's notable progress in improving the accessibility and reach of the Audiovisual Library, particularly through the podcast project, and enhancing the diversity of the lecturers participating in the Lecture Series.

67. With regard to the efficiency of the Programme of Assistance, her delegation welcomed the efforts that had been made to provide as many fellowships as possible, within existing resources, in order to accommodate the largest possible number of students. It was grateful to the States and organizations that had made in-kind and financial contributions to those courses.

68. Her delegation appreciated the ways in which the Codification Division had managed to maintain important programmes despite limited resources and encouraged it to continue its commendable efforts to secure voluntary contributions for the Programme. There was no question that the Programme's activities were valuable and worthy of support.

69. **Mr. Al Samikh** (Qatar) said that respect for international law represented the single basic standard for the behaviour of States and the foundation of international relations. Awareness of such law must therefore be raised in the interest of world peace. For 54 years, the Programme of Assistance had played a leading role in strengthening international law, which was a well-established means of promoting international peace and security and encouraging friendly relations and cooperation among States. The Audiovisual Library helped achieve the Programme's aims by providing

tools that were widely used, including by legal practitioners and scholars. His delegation commended the Codification Division on the publication of the *United Nations Legislative Series, the Summaries of Judgments, Advisory Opinions and Orders of the International Court of Justice* and the *Summaries of Judgments, Advisory Opinions and Orders of the Permanent Court of International Justice*.

70. In view of current international tensions, conflicts and crises, the Programme of Assistance and the Audiovisual Library were more important than ever in improving understanding of international law, including through the in-depth study of emerging issues. The existence of a multilateral system based on the rules and principles of international law contributed to international peace and security and prosperity for all. Multilateral conventions had played a pioneering role in strengthening the rule of law and safeguarding the rules-based international system. In an increasingly interdependent world, in which the number of such conventions was increasing, the Programme of Assistance must have the resources it needed to fulfil its mandate.

71. His delegation reiterated its support for the Programme and commended the efforts of the Codification Division and the secretariat of the Programme to meet the changing needs of the international legal community in the twenty-first-century. The fellowships and courses offered through the Programme strengthened international law and helped develop the capacities of those involved in the application of such law.

72. In line with his Government's policy of strengthening the rule of law at the national and international levels, it had provided ongoing financial support to the Programme with the aim, in particular, of increasing the participation of jurists from developing countries in the Programme's activities. It had also sought to maximize the participation of Qatari jurists, to enhance their capacity and raise their awareness of international law.

73. **Ms. Melikbekyan** (Russian Federation) said that as a result of the funding provided to the Programme of Assistance from the regular budget, the Programme had become more stable. The Codification Division had been able to continue to hold the regional courses in international law, run the International Law Fellowship Programme and supplement the Audiovisual Library. During the off-site session conducted in the Russian Federation in the reporting period, lectures by Russian academics and practitioners in the field of international law had been recorded. Some of those lectures were

already accessible through the Audiovisual Library. The Codification Division staff should be recognized for their efforts to ensure the success of the Programme, which was important for the promotion of the rule of law at the international level.

74. **Mr. Marani** (Argentina) said that that, as a member of the Advisory Committee, Argentina placed great importance on the dissemination of international law and, consequently, on the International Law Fellowship Programme and the regional courses in international law. The objectives of the Programme of Assistance should be to build capacities in developing countries, make documents available in the official languages of the United Nations and provide effective means of accessing those documents, in particular for persons in developing countries.

75. His delegation welcomed the progress that had been made during the reporting period with regard to the regional courses and the Audiovisual Library, including the off-site mission to Argentina to record lectures in Spanish by Latin American scholars and practitioners. It was also pleased that funding from the regular budget had made it possible to implement all the activities planned for 2019 and improve the gender balance among the lecturers and course participants. The Hamilton Shirley Amerasinghe Memorial Fellowship should be funded from the regular budget if insufficient voluntary contributions were received.

76. **Ms. Asgedom** (Ethiopia) said that the Audiovisual Library and the United Nations treaty database provided Governments with essential resources in international law. The Programme of Assistance played a crucial role in building the capacity needed to uphold the rule of law at the national and international levels and to foster multilateralism. Her Government valued the regional courses in international law for Africa, which had been held regularly in Addis Ababa since 2011, and called on all partners to continue to support the Programme.

77. **Mr. Fintakpa Lamega** (Togo) said that his delegation commended the Codification Division for implementing the Programme of Assistance, from which Togo had benefited and which gave participants, including students and teachers of international law, practitioners and diplomats from developing countries, a unique opportunity to improve their knowledge of international law and better address the questions that arose in their day-to-day tasks. His delegation welcomed the fact that the regional courses and the Fellowship Programme would be funded from the regular budget in 2020, and encouraged the Codification Division to increase the number of fellowships provided.

78. His delegation was honoured that a Togolese national had been awarded the 2019 Hamilton Shirley Amerasinghe Memorial Fellowship on the Law of the Sea, which was funded through contributions from Member States, organizations, foundations and individuals. He thanked the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea and all partners for their efforts to improve understanding of international law, particularly the law of the sea. The Codification Division should ensure that the links between members of the network of training programme alumni were strong and that the network created opportunities.

79. **Ms. Rivera Sánchez** (El Salvador) said that international law was essential to universal peace, justice and respect for obligations arising from treaties and other sources of such law. To enhance legal certainty, it was increasingly necessary to regulate the international legal order in such areas as the comprehensive protection of human rights in migration, State responsibility for the preservation of the environment, and counter-terrorism. The Programme of Assistance was therefore in the highest interest of States, since it had helped disseminate international law and build the capacities of Member State institutions, academia and NGOs in the area.

80. Her delegation welcomed the success of the 2019 regional course in international law for Latin America and the Caribbean, which had been attended by 21 students, 15 of whom had been women. The course had comprised seminars on the law of treaties, State responsibility, international peace and security, the peaceful settlement of disputes, the law of the sea and international humanitarian law. Such courses provided an invaluable opportunity for strengthening the capacities of developing countries and created a ripple effect as knowledge was passed on within national professional and academic sectors. She thanked the Organization, in particular the Office of Legal Affairs, and the Government of Chile for implementing the Programme, which met the needs of Member States in the area of multilateral negotiation at the United Nations. Her delegation called on Member States to continue to support the regional courses, which had benefited officials from different legal systems and regions of the world.

81. Documents in the Audiovisual Library, which was an essential resource for disseminating international law, in particular in countries where specialized programmes were not available, should be available in all official languages, to improve access to information in the various geographical regions.

82. **Ms. Şiman** (Republic of Moldova) said that her delegation commended the Codification Division on implementing the Programme of Assistance, which broadened comprehension of international law and helped uphold justice. Given that a better understanding of international law was key to the fulfilment by States of their shared obligations to maintain international peace and security, develop friendly relations and cooperate in solving international problems, the State University of the Republic of Moldova had integrated the Lecture Series of the Audiovisual Library into its master's and doctoral courses in international law. The Programme of Assistance was essential in strengthening the role of international law in international relations, in particular by enabling government legal officers and researchers in developing countries and countries with emerging economies to increase their knowledge of international law.

83. **Ms. Onanga** (Gabon) said that all efforts to strengthen the rule of law must be made in keeping with the need to promote and disseminate international law through training. In that connection, her delegation commended the efforts of the Codification Division and the Hague Academy of International Law to build capacities in developing countries through training and education activities, including fellowship programmes and regional courses, that benefited a large number of diplomats, university students and legal practitioners every year.

84. Demand for places in the United Nations regional courses in international law was high, and her delegation was pleased that a Gabonese official had been able to attend the 2019 regional course for Africa, which had been conducted in French and had comprised seminars on varied, contemporary matters. Gabon commended the efforts of the Codification Division to develop the Audiovisual Library of International Law over the years and particularly welcomed the podcast project, thanks to which audio files of lectures could now be streamed or downloaded.

85. It was important for the General Assembly to allocate significant resources to ensure that the activities of the Programme of Assistance were strengthened and maintained in the long term, given the Programme's importance in the promotion of international law and capacity-building in developing countries.

86. **Mr. Htet** (Myanmar) said that his Government was committed to the rules-based international system. Multilateralism could succeed only if relations between States were based on the rule of law; the primary responsibility of the United Nations was to maintain international peace and security by strengthening that

rule at the international and national levels. Knowledge of and commitment to international law among Member States greatly contributed to the maintenance of the rules-based system; the strengthening of the rule of law at the national and international levels and the wider dissemination and appreciation of international law were directly linked. The Programme of Assistance had done much to strengthen the rule of law at both levels, particularly through capacity-building. Furthermore, the use of advanced information and communications technology had greatly enhanced the role of the Audiovisual Library, particularly the Lecture Series, in the dissemination of international law.

87. His delegation thanked the countries that hosted the regional courses in international law and the Member States that made voluntary contributions to the Programme, which helped developing countries in their efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 16. It also thanked the Government of Thailand and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific for supporting the 2018 regional course for the Asia-Pacific region, held in Bangkok, with 29 participants from 28 countries, including Myanmar. The course helped to promote regional understanding and cooperation in legal matters.

88. His Government had nurtured democratic norms and values by promoting the rule of law since it had embarked on the transition to democracy. The expansion of the Programme of Assistance would contribute to the dissemination of legal knowledge, especially among young people; such dissemination was critical to democratization. Since adequate funding was vital to the implementation of the Programme, his delegation welcomed the allocation of regular budget funding for 2020.

89. **Ms. Nze Mansogo** (Equatorial Guinea) said that her delegation hoped that the implementation of the Programme of Assistance in 2020 would not be hindered for administrative or financial reasons. It welcomed the observance of the principles of geographical diversity in the selection of fellows for the International Law Fellowship Programme and of gender parity in the regional courses in international law, and the updating of the Audiovisual Library.

90. The Programme was essential to the establishment, pursuant to the Charter, of conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law could be maintained. Training jurists and diplomats from all countries through the Programme was the best way to promote respect for international law, enhance the rule of law and strengthen international peace and

security. Her delegation commended the Codification Division and those Member States that had made voluntary contributions to the Programme in the reporting period, and encouraged other countries to do likewise. Despite the financial situation of the Organization, the Division should make every effort to publish the relevant documents in the Audiovisual Library in all official languages.

91. **Mr. Skoknic Tapia** (Chile) said that that his delegation commended the Codification Division on the implementation of the Programme, in particular the regional courses in international law, which had not always been held in previous years because of a lack of financial resources. The courses were a unique opportunity to improve the legal training of and establish links between participants from developing countries. Of the 21 participants in the 2019 regional course for Latin America and the Caribbean, held at the headquarters of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean in Santiago, 14 had been women, a step towards gender equality in the programmes and activities considered by the Sixth Committee.

92. His delegation agreed with the assertion in the report of the Secretary-General ([A/74/496](#)) that the regional commissions provided not only infrastructure free of charge, but also significant administrative and logistical support during the planning and conduct of the courses, and that such support resulted in enhanced financial and administrative efficiency and greater certainty and consistency for the courses. Accordingly, the courses should continue to be held at the Economic Commission for Africa, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. To consolidate the success of the Programme and ensure that it fulfilled its mandate, Member States should make voluntary contributions to the Programme to supplement the funding from the regular budget, which must also be maintained.

93. His delegation welcomed the attention paid by the Codification Division to the geographical and linguistic diversity of the in-person training programmes and the expansion of the Audiovisual Library, and appreciated the increase in the use of Spanish for publications available in the Library.

94. **Ms. Sebbar** (Morocco) said that Morocco supported the position expressed in respect of the Programme in paragraph 12 of General Assembly resolution [73/201](#). As a developing country keen to gain international expertise and build its capacities in international law, it had offered to host the external

programme of the Hague Academy of International Law, on the theme of constants and innovation in the international law of the sea, in November 2019 in Rabat. The programme would be attended by around 40 participants, including around 20 from a number of African countries. Its objectives coincided with those of the Programme of Assistance and it could give Morocco new opportunities for bilateral or multilateral cooperation.

95. The Programme of Assistance was funded through the regular budget but needed more resources to remain viable and strengthen its position in future programme budgets; more support initiatives and voluntary contributions were therefore required. The financial impact of providing such support should not overshadow the noble aspects of the Programme, which would benefit future generations in developing countries.

96. Her delegation thanked all those whose efforts allowed the Programme to meet State's needs, in particular the Codification Division, which disseminated legal publications and, through the Audiovisual Library, online lectures, in developing countries; the Hague Academy of International Law, which hosted the International Law Fellowship Programme and allowed participants in the Fellowship Programme to attend its public international law session and use its library; the International Law Seminar; the countries that hosted the regional courses; the African Institute of International Law; and the States and international and regional organizations that supported the Programme of Assistance.

97. **Ms. Ighil** (Algeria) said that the Codification Division was to be commended for ensuring the efficient operation of the Programme of Assistance. Since its establishment, the Programme had fostered a deeper understanding of international law, thereby strengthening international peace and security, promoting friendly relations and cooperation among States and supporting the rule of law at the national and international levels. The Programme's role in the dissemination of international law, including through capacity-building and information-sharing at all levels, helped to ensure compliance with international law and shape its progressive development.

98. Practitioners, especially those in developing countries, benefited from the expanded international law training opportunities provided through the regional courses and the Fellowship Programme, which allowed them to focus on issues of international law of common interest to their region and to share ideas and knowledge. Her delegation welcomed the high priority

given by the Codification Division to gender parity and equitable geographical and linguistic representation among the participants in the courses and the Programme, which, together with the Audiovisual Library, should continue to be funded from the regular budget. The number of fellowships funded from that budget should be increased.

99. The Audiovisual Library was an essential research and teaching resource through which an unlimited number of users, especially from developing countries, had easy, low-cost access to a wide range of materials, including podcasts. In the interests of multilingualism, materials should be published in a greater number of languages, including Arabic. Her delegation welcomed the addition, on the main web page of the Audiovisual Library, of a video that contained explanations of how to use the site's audio features.

100. **Ms. Philips-Umezurike** (Nigeria) said that her delegation would continue to support efforts directed towards sustaining the Programme of Assistance, in the knowledge that the teaching, study, dissemination and wider appreciation of international law contributed to a greater understanding of complex global issues. Nigeria played an important role in the development of law and the advancement of the judiciaries of a number of African nations, in particular in West Africa, through the training and deployment of judges to serve in those countries. It supported capacity-building in the judiciary through its National Judicial Institute, whose statutory functions included the promotion of international law and the provision of related training.

101. Her Government supported the additional funding included in the regular budget for the biennium 2018–2019 for the Programme of Assistance and commended the voluntary contributions made by some Member States.

102. The Office of Legal Affairs and the Codification Division were to be commended for their tireless efforts to implement the Programme of Assistance, which benefited students and practitioners of international law worldwide. The regional courses in international law, such as the one held in Addis Ababa in 2019, the International Law Fellowship Programme and the Audiovisual Library contributed to a wider understanding of international law. The United Nations should promote the use of the Library, and the desktop publishing activities that had been resumed in 2017 should be continued.

103. **Ms. Ruhama** (Malaysia) said that international law was the bedrock of inter-State relations and that it needed to be better understood in order for it to be properly implemented. The Programme of Assistance

had significantly enhanced understanding of international law among practitioners and others working in the area. The overwhelming response to the Programme showed that demand for international law training was strong. Her delegation welcomed the improved gender balance and geographical diversity among the beneficiaries of the Programme, which should be extended to a wider audience. It commended the Codification Division on enhancing the Audiovisual Library, facilitating access to the Library for users without reliable high-speed Internet by establishing the podcast project and disseminating materials in hard copy, producing miniseries of lectures for people with minimal knowledge of international law and making materials available in as many languages as possible. The Programme was essential to fostering the rule of law in international relations and should continue to be funded from the regular budget.

104. **Mr. Nyanid** (Cameroon) said that, as a result of the emergence of new challenges, norms and actors owing to globalization, particularly in recent years, the international community was no longer governed only by sovereign States working to further their own national or collective interests; international law therefore played a key role in international relations. The position of NGOs and civil society in forums and institutions had been strengthened, and, as a result, new norms had been progressively developed, international institutions had been established, and innovative means of enforcing the compliance of States and international organizations with those norms had been introduced. The regulation of the new configuration must be understood by all so that the rule of law was upheld at the national and international levels.

105. His delegation commended the Codification Division for implementing the Programme of Assistance. It supported the International Law Fellowship Programme, through which practitioners from developing and emerging countries received full training in international law, but the number of participants should be increased so that the three regional courses in international law held in for Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean could play their role of offering additional training opportunities. His delegation was concerned by the limited number of places available for the regional course for Africa in particular. As only 25 of the 252 applications for the 2019 course had been accepted, not all of the 27 countries from which the applicants came had been represented in the course.

106. Openness and flexibility were all the more important because the topics addressed at the regional courses, including an introduction to international law,

research in international law, the law of treaties, African Union law and institutions, State responsibility, diplomatic and consular relations, the peaceful settlement of international disputes, the law of the sea, international criminal law and international investment law, were essential to the people and countries of the three regions, because they strengthened the capacities of participants and allowed them to share experience and build networks. His delegation therefore welcomed General Assembly resolution [73/201](#), in which the Secretary-General was encouraged to support the establishment of networks of alumni of the training programmes held under the Programme of Assistance, and commended the Codification Division for its efforts to establish such networks.

107. Although his delegation recognized that in-person training offered the unique advantages of in-depth discussions, interaction and cooperation among participants, it advocated the enhancement of the Audiovisual Library, through which the United Nations provided online training, at a lower cost, to an unlimited number of individuals and institutions around the world. The Codification Division should continue to gather, establish and print the documents necessary for its training programmes; his delegation welcomed the provision by the Division of pedagogical aids, legal publications and other international law documents to participants from developing countries with limited access to the Internet. Financial support should be found for participants from low-income countries, and his delegation welcomed the Hamilton Shirley Amerasinghe Memorial Fellowship on the Law of the Sea, through which participants could realize their dreams and a solid community of jurists could be built. Given that resources were becoming scarcer and extensive restrictions were being imposed, the Programme of Assistance should, in accordance with General Assembly resolution [73/201](#), be funded from section 8, Legal affairs, subprogramme 3, Progressive development and codification of international law, of the regular budget.

108. Since the Programme of Assistance was intended to promote understanding of international law, it should address aspects of globalized international law, including the emergence of multinational and transnational companies; the applicability of certain norms in grey areas of international law, for example internal armed conflicts and internal disturbances; and new legal issues related to the rights of migrant workers, freedom of expression and the information technology revolution, and mass internal displacement resulting from civil war. The Codification Division should also

interact with NGOs, multinationals and other partners to share information and obtain funding.

109. To modernize the Programme, the Codification Division should consider following what was known as the clinical approach taken by universities in Canada and elsewhere. Under that approach, students, working in teams under the direct supervision of academics and practitioners, actively handled cases, acquired practical experience of international law and familiarized themselves with the related methodological and ethical challenges. That approach linked theory with practice and could offer a new and useful way of understanding international law in all its aspects.

110. **Mr. Taufan** (Indonesia) said that the Programme of Assistance was critical to the dissemination of international law, particularly at the global level, and promoted the principles and purposes of the Charter, the peaceful settlement of disputes and respect for the rule of law. Given that the teaching, study and dissemination of international law helped meet the requirement, in every democratic legal system, for international law to have a positive influence on domestic law, an international conference on the development of international law in Asia had been held in October 2019 in Jakarta, and a national symposium on international law, which had focused on the urgent need to establish national legislation to address the decisions of international organizations, including the Security Council, had been held in August 2019 in Samarinda, Indonesia. The conferences had been intended to support the development of international law regionally and globally, and to promote the understanding and implementation of international law at the national level.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.