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UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE CARRIAGE OF GOODS BY SEA

Note by the Secretary-General

1. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 31/100 of 15 December 1976 and General Assembly decision 32/438 of 16 December 1977, the United Nations Conference on the Carriage of Goods by Sea was held, upon the invitation of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, at Hamburg from 6 to 31 March 1978.
2. Seventy-eight States were represented at the Conference. One State, eight intergovernmental and seven non-governmental organizations sent observers to the Conference.
3. The Conference elected Mr. R. Herber (Federal Republic of Germany) as President, Mr. M. Chafik (Egypt) as Chairman of the First Committee, Mr. D. Popov (Bulgaria) as Chairman of the Second Committee, Mr. R. K. Dixit (India) as Chairman of the Drafting Committee, and Mrs. H. H. Yusof (Malaysia) as Chairman of the Credentials Committee. The Conference was serviced by the Secretariat of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law.
4. The Conference adopted a Convention on the Carriage of Goods by Sea, to be known as the "Hamburg Rules" (A/CONF.89/13, annex I), a Final Act (A/CONF.89/13), a "Common Understanding" and a resolution (A/CONF.89/13, annexes II and III).
5. The Convention was opened for signature at the concluding meeting of the Conference on 31 March 1978 and, on that day, signed by 14 States. The Convention will remain open for signature at United Nations Headquarters in New York until 30 April 1979, after which date it will be open for accession, in accordance with its provisions.

Revision conferences

6. The Convention provides for a conference of the Contracting States for revising or amending it; such conference shall be convened by the Secretary-General of the United Nations as the depositary of the Convention at the request of not less than one-third of the Contracting States (art. 32).

7. The Convention also makes provision for a revision conference for the exclusive purpose of altering the limitation amounts (in case of a significant change in their real value) and the unit of account or monetary unit defined in article 26; such conference shall be convened by the depositary when not less than one fourth of the Contracting States so request (art. 33).
