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TRAINING AND ASSISTANCE

Report of the Secretary-General

1. At the seventeenth session of the Commission, 1/ there was wide agreement that the sponsorship of regional symposia and seminars on international trade law in general should be continued and strengthened. It was stressed that such symposia and seminars were of great benefit to lawyers and businessmen in developing countries. The Commission approved the general approach taken by the Secretariat in the organization of symposia and seminars.
2. By its resolution 39/82 of 13 December 1984 on the report of the Commission on the work of its seventeenth session, the General Assembly reaffirmed the importance, in particular for developing countries, of the work of the Commission concerned with training and assistance in the field of international trade law. It also reaffirmed the desirability for the Commission to sponsor symposia and seminars, in particular those organized on a regional basis, to promote training and assistance in the field of international trade law. The General Assembly also expressed its appreciation to Governments and institutions for arranging symposia and seminars, and invited Governments, relevant United Nations organs, organizations, institutions and individuals to assist the Secretariat in financing and organizing symposia and seminars. The main activities undertaken in this field since the date of the report on training and assistance presented to the seventeenth session of the Commission (A/CN.9/256), and some activities which are intended to be undertaken in the course of 1985 and early 1986, are set forth below in the chronological order in which they have occurred or are expected to occur.

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1/ Report of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law on the work of its seventeenth session, Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 17 (A/39/17), para. 141.

3. The UNCITRAL Secretariat collaborated in a joint working programme (Vienna, 5 September 1984) with the International Bar Association (IBA). The agenda related to topics of special interest to Committee D (concerned with procedures for settling disputes) and Committee T (concerned with international construction contracts) of the IBA, and there was a discussion of the progress of work on the UNCITRAL draft model law on international commercial arbitration (hereinafter referred to as the UNCITRAL draft model law) and the UNCITRAL draft legal guide on drawing up international contracts for the construction of industrial works (hereinafter referred to as the UNCITRAL draft legal guide on industrial contracts).

4. An Asian Pacific Regional Trade Law Seminar (Canberra, Australia, 22-27 November 1984) was conducted by the Attorney-General's Department of Australia, in association with the UNCITRAL Secretariat and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee. The International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT) and the Hague Conference on Private International Law also participated. The seminar was attended by lawyers, businessmen and government officials from twenty-five countries in the region. Fellowships were provided by the Government of Australia for participants from the region. The main subjects emanating from the work of the Commission which were discussed were the United Nations Convention on the Carriage of Goods by Sea, 1978 (hereinafter referred to as the Hamburg Rules), the United Nations Convention on Contracts for the International Sale of Goods (Vienna, 1980) (hereinafter referred to as the Vienna Sales Convention), and the UNCITRAL draft legal guide on industrial contracts. Other subjects discussed included the Convention on Agency in the International Sale of Goods, Geneva, 1983, the revision of the Convention on the Law Applicable to the International Sale of Goods, The Hague, 1955 and the settlement of international commercial disputes in the region.

5. The UNCITRAL Secretariat participated in a seminar (Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia, 11-23 March 1985) on the international sale of goods organized by the Inter-University Centre of Postgraduate Studies, Dubrovnik. The major topic for discussion was the Vienna Sales Convention. The seminar was intended as an intensive course for young lawyers and legal researchers at the post-graduate level, and was attended by forty participants, mostly from various European countries. Fellowships for attending the seminar were provided by the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst of the Federal Republic of Germany, the Inter-University Centre, the Swiss National Fund, and Zagreb University.

6. The Chamber of Commerce of Bogotá and the UNCITRAL Secretariat will organize a regional seminar (Bogotá, Colombia, 22-23 April 1985) on international trade law and foreign trade, with the support of the Secretariat of the Organisation of American States. The seminar will be attended by practising lawyers, law teachers and businessmen from countries of the Andean region. The subjects to be discussed are UNCITRAL's role in Latin America, the Hamburg Rules, the Convention on the Limitation Period in the International Sale of Goods, New York, 1974, the Vienna Sales Convention, the UNCITRAL Arbitration Rules and Conciliation Rules, the UNCITRAL draft model law and the UNCITRAL draft legal guide on industrial contracts.

7. The UNCITRAL Secretariat will collaborate, together with the Economic University of Vienna, in a summer school seminar (Vienna, 7 July - 2 August 1985) organized by the Dickinson School of Law, Pennsylvania, United States, dealing with the unification and harmonization of international trade law. The seminar will deal in general with the work of UNCITRAL, and will consider in detail the Vienna Sales Convention, the UNCITRAL draft model law, and the UNCITRAL draft legal guide on industrial contracts.

8. The UNCITRAL Secretariat will participate in an Euro-Arab Congress (Port El-Kantaouy (Sousse), Tunisia, 24-27 September 1985) on arbitration in Euro-Arab relations. The Congress will be a bi-regional symposium organized by the Euro-Arab Chambers of Commerce.

9. The UNCITRAL Secretariat will collaborate with the International Development Law Institute in a seminar (Rome, 1-14 December 1985) on resolving international commercial disputes. The seminar will be attended by government officials from developing countries. Among the subjects for discussion will be the UNCITRAL Arbitration Rules and Conciliation Rules and the UNCITRAL draft model law.

10. The Government of Djibouti and the International Chamber of Commerce will organize a regional seminar in Djibouti during the course of 1985 on the settlement of international commercial disputes in developing countries, in collaboration with the Chamber of Industry of Djibouti, the UNCITRAL Secretariat, and the European Development Fund. The conference will consider the UNCITRAL Arbitration Rules and Conciliation Rules, and the UNCITRAL draft model law.

11. The Regional Centre for Commercial Arbitration, Cairo and the UNCITRAL Secretariat are considering the organization of a regional seminar on international commercial arbitration in Cairo early in 1986. The subjects to be discussed are likely to be the promotion of arbitration in the region, and the work of UNCITRAL in the field of the settlement of international commercial disputes through arbitration and conciliation. It is expected that participants from several Middle Eastern countries will attend.

12. The UNCITRAL Secretariat will have discussions with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) with a view to collaborating with those institutions in including international trade law subjects in the regional symposia and seminars organized by them in developing countries.

13. On several occasions other than those mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, the UNCITRAL Secretariat has addressed gatherings of lawyers and government officials in order to promote the work of the Commission. The Secretariat has also contributed articles to legal periodicals on various aspects of the Commission's work. The Secretariat intends to keep in touch with organizations and Governments with a view to collaborating with them in organizing symposia and seminars.

14. Since the seventeenth session of the Commission, three interns received training with the UNCITRAL Secretariat, and were associated with on-going projects of the Commission.