



UNITED NATIONS  
GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY



Distr.  
GENERAL

A/CN.9/40  
1 April 1970

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON  
INTERNATIONAL TRADE LAW  
Third session  
New York, 6 April 1970  
Item 8 (a) and (b) of the provisional agenda

REGISTER OF ORGANIZATIONS AND REGISTER OF TEXTS

Report by the Secretary-General

I. REGISTER OF TEXTS

1. At its second session the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law adopted the following decision regarding the Register of Texts:<sup>1/</sup>

"1. The Commission confirms its earlier view, expressed in chapter V of the report on the work of its first session, namely, that the registers should reproduce the full text of existing international instruments and should be published in English, French, Russian and Spanish. It considers that two specific steps should be taken to reduce expenditure: (a) so far as possible, when there is no official translation of an international instrument, existing unofficial translations should be used so as to minimize translation costs which are a major element of the cost estimates; members of the Commission should be encouraged to make such translations available to the Secretary-General; and (b) the registers should follow a form which would make them suitable for commercial sale;

"2. The Commission decides to add to the fields already indicated in paragraph 5 of chapter V of the report on its first session the fields of guarantees and securities and international shipping legislation;

"3. The Commission requests the Secretary-General to include information on the work of the Commission in the register of organizations;

<sup>1/</sup> Report of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law on the work of the second session (1969), Official Records of the General Assembly, Supplement No. 18 (A/7618), para. 141 at pp. 36-37.

"4. The Commission requests the Secretary-General to commence work on the register of texts by publishing, as the first stage, the relevant material on the international sale of goods, on negotiable instruments, on bankers' commercial credits and on guarantees and securities. It considers that the register of texts, as established in the first stage, should, in addition, to the texts of international instruments in the fields mentioned above list the title and sources of instruments in all fields to be covered by the register, so as to increase immediately the usefulness of the register of texts."

2. In accordance with this decision the Secretariat is currently preparing the first stage of the Register of Texts in four languages. These volumes will contain the texts of conventions and other relevant instruments, and summaries of draft conventions in the fields of the international sale of goods and international payments (negotiable instruments, guarantees and securities and bankers' commercial credits). Pursuant to the decision in sub-paragraph 4 quoted above the Register will also contain the titles and sources of conventions and other instruments "in all fields to be covered by the register". Under the decision in sub-paragraph 2 (referring to paragraph 5 of chapter V on the report of the Commission's first session),<sup>2/</sup> this information will include the fields of international commercial arbitration and international shipping legislation.

3. It is expected that the volumes in the first stage of the Register of Texts, as described in paragraph 2 above, will be completed and submitted for publication in 1970.

4. The Commission may consider, in planning for work on subsequent stages of the Register of Texts. Whether it would wish to approve in principle the publication of a second stage of the registers, to include the texts of conventions within the priority topics that were not covered by the first stage, described above. The Commission may wish the Secretary-General to report at the fourth session on the contents of a second set of volumes, and the financial implications thereof.<sup>3/</sup>

---

<sup>2/</sup> Report of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law on the work of its first session (1968), Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-third Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/7216), para. 60.

<sup>3/</sup> Presumably the second stage would include the texts of conventions in the priority topics of international commercial arbitration and international shipping legislation.

## II. REGISTER OF ORGANIZATIONS

5. At its first session the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law requested the Secretary-General to set up a register of organizations.<sup>4/</sup> Under the Commission's resolution, this register would contain the names of organs of the United Nations, specialized agencies and intergovernmental organizations, and international non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, which are active in specified fields of international trade law. The Commission decided that: "This register would be compiled in consultation with the organizations concerned and would contain a summary of work... which has been accomplished or is being undertaken by the organizations referred to in the register."
6. Pursuant to the Commission's request, a questionnaire was sent on 21 August 1969 to the forty-nine organizations listed in annex I of this report. Replies have not as yet been received from fourteen organizations. Nineteen organizations replied that they have not worked and are not working on any projects within the range of the specified subjects. Seven organizations replied that they had completed one or more projects within the specified fields but were not currently engaged in such activities.
7. Nine organizations reported current projects in the designated areas. The replies to the questionnaire describing projects currently in progress will be circulated to the members of the Commission.
8. It will be noted that conventions and similar legal instruments within the Commission's field of work that have been completed by the above organizations will be included in the initial volumes of the Register of Texts, either in full (sale of goods; international payments) or by references to titles and sources (international commercial arbitration; international shipping legislation). See supra, paragraph 2.
9. The Commission may wish to consider the most appropriate form for the dissemination of information on the work currently in process. The description

---

<sup>4/</sup> Report of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law on the work of its first session (1968), Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-third Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/7216), para. 60, pp. 27-29.

of current work is necessarily of a transitory character. Some projects can be expected to be abandoned or substantially modified in the course of development. Projects which have been completed in the form of conventions or similar legal instruments presumably will appear in the Register of Texts. On the other hand, information about current projects, in spite of its transitory nature, would be useful to the Commission in performing its function of co-ordination, and in planning its own work so as to avoid duplication of effort. The Commission may wish to consider the following alternative methods for the presentation of this material:

(a) One alternative would be a permanent publication comparable to the Register of Texts;

(b) A second alternative method for presenting this material to the Commission for its use in co-ordination and in planning its work programme would be through reports to the Commission for consideration at its annual sessions;<sup>5/</sup> if the Commission wished, this material could then be published in the Yearbook.

10. In considering the above alternatives, the Commission may wish to take account of the fact that, subsequent to the second session of the Commission, the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT) has published a loose-leaf compendium entitled "Digest of Legal Activities of International Organizations and Other Institutions". The information set out in the Digest with respect to the current work of these organizations is similar to that requested in the Secretary-General's questionnaire. The foreword of the UNIDROIT Digest states: "Some shortcomings will inevitably appear in the first edition: these gaps will be duly filled through the successive updatings of this publication, to be periodically issued starting from 1970. Thus, the Digest will offer a comprehensive picture of legal activities undertaken by the different international organizations and will become an essential consultation tool to those who are engaged in this field."<sup>6/</sup>

---

<sup>5/</sup> See the information on current work received in response to the Secretary-General's questionnaire, which is being circulated separately.

<sup>6/</sup> A copy of the UNIDROIT Digest will be available for inspection during the third session of the Commission.

ANNEX

List of United Nations organs, specialized agencies and  
other organizations invited by the Secretary-General to  
submit information regarding their activities

1. Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization
2. International Maritime Committee
3. International Institute for the Unification of Private Law
4. Institute of International Law
5. International Chamber of Shipping
6. International Chamber of Commerce
7. International Shipping Federation
8. International Union of Marine Insurance
9. International Organization for Standardization
10. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
11. United Nations Industrial Development Organization
12. Economic Commission for Europe
13. Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East
14. Economic Commission for Latin America
15. Economic Commission for Africa
16. United Nations Development Programme
17. United Nations Institute for Training and Research
18. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
19. General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
20. International Civil Aviation Organization
21. International Labour Organisation
22. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
23. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
24. International Monetary Fund
25. International Development Association
26. International Finance Corporation
27. African Development Bank
28. Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee

/...

29. Asian Development Bank
30. Bank for International Settlements
31. European Economic Communities
32. Council for Mutual Economic Assistance
33. Council of Europe
34. Council of the European Communities
35. Commission of the European Communities
36. European Free Trade Association
37. Hague Conference on Private International Law
38. Latin American Free Trade Association
39. League of Arab States
40. Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
41. Organization of African Unity
42. Organization of American States
43. Afro-Asian Organization for Economic Co-operation
44. International Bar Association
45. International Law Association
46. International Union for Inland Navigation
47. International Association for the Promotion and Protection of Private Foreign Investments
48. International Association of Legal Science
49. International Savings Banks Institute

-----