



General Assembly

Distr.: Limited
10 September 2019

Original: English

**United Nations Commission on
International Trade Law
Working Group V (Insolvency Law)
Fifty-sixth session
Vienna, 2–5 December 2019**

Annotated provisional agenda

I. Provisional agenda

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II. Composition of the Working Group

1. The Working Group is composed of the following States: Algeria (2025), Argentina (2022), Australia (2022), Austria (2022), Belarus (2022), Belgium (2025), Brazil (2022), Burundi (2022), Cameroon (2025), Canada (2025), Chile (2022), China (2025), Colombia (2022), Côte d'Ivoire (2025), Croatia (2025), Czechia (2022), Dominican Republic (2025), Ecuador (2025), Finland (2025), France (2025), Germany (2025), Ghana (2025), Honduras (2025), Hungary (2025), India (2022), Indonesia (2025), Iran (Islamic Republic of) (2022), Israel (2022), Italy (2022), Japan (2025), Kenya (2022), Lebanon (2022), Lesotho (2022), Libya (2022), Malaysia (2025), Mali (2025), Mauritius (2022), Mexico (2025), Nigeria (2022), Pakistan (2022), Peru (2025), Philippines (2022), Poland (2022), Republic of Korea (2025), Romania (2022), Russian Federation (2025), Singapore (2025), South Africa (2025), Spain (2022), Sri Lanka (2022), Switzerland (2025), Thailand (2022), Turkey (2022), Uganda (2022), Ukraine (2025), United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (2025), United States of America (2022), Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) (2022), Viet Nam (2025) and Zimbabwe (2025).

2. Member States not members of the Working Group, non-member States having received a standing invitation to participate as observers in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly, and international governmental organizations may attend the session as observers and participate in the deliberations. In addition, invited international non-governmental organizations may attend the session as observers and



represent the views of their organizations on matters where the organization concerned has expertise or international experience so as to facilitate the deliberations at the session.

III. Annotations to agenda items

Item 1. Opening of the session

3. The fifty-sixth session of the Working Group will be held at the Vienna International Centre in Vienna, from Monday, 2 December to Thursday, 5 December 2019 (four working days). Meeting hours will be from 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. and from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m., except on the first day of the session, Monday, 2 December 2019, when the meeting will commence at 10 a.m.

4. Consistent with decisions taken by the Commission at its thirty-fourth session,¹ the Working Group is expected to hold substantive deliberations during the first seven half-day meetings (that is, from Monday to Thursday morning). The report is to be adopted at the last meeting of the Working Group (on Thursday afternoon) (see para. 20 below).

Item 2. Election of officers

5. In accordance with its practice at previous sessions, the Working Group may wish to elect a Chairman and a Rapporteur.

Item 4. Consideration of micro and small enterprises (MSE) insolvency issues

1. Background information

6. At its forty-sixth session, in 2013, the Commission requested the Working Group to conduct, at its spring 2014 session, a preliminary examination of issues relevant to the insolvency of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), and in particular to consider whether the UNCITRAL Legislative Guide on Insolvency Law provided sufficient and adequate solutions for MSMEs. If it did not, the Working Group was requested to consider what further work and potential work product might be required to streamline and simplify insolvency procedures for MSMEs. Its conclusions on those MSME issues were to be included in its progress report to the Commission in 2014 in sufficient detail to enable the Commission to consider what, if any, future work might be required.²

7. At its forty-fifth session (New York, 21–25 April 2014), the Working Group considered the topic as requested and agreed that the issues facing MSMEs were not entirely novel and that solutions for them should be developed in light of the key insolvency principles and the guidance already provided by the Legislative Guide. The Working Group further agreed that it would not be necessary to wait for the results of the work being done by UNCITRAL Working Group I (MSMEs) in order to commence the study of insolvency regimes for MSMEs. As to the form that work might take, the Working Group agreed that, while such work might form an additional part to the Legislative Guide, no firm conclusion on that point could be taken in advance of undertaking a thorough analysis of the issues at stake (A/CN.9/803, para. 14).

8. At its forty-ninth session, in 2016, the Commission agreed that the Working Group should develop appropriate mechanisms and solutions, focusing on both natural and legal persons engaged in commercial activity, to resolve the insolvency of MSMEs. While the key insolvency principles and the guidance provided by the UNCITRAL Legislative Guide on Insolvency Law should be the starting point for discussions, the Working Group should aim to tailor the mechanisms already provided

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 17* and corrigendum (A/56/17 and Corr.3), para. 381.

² *Ibid.*, *Sixty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 17* (A/68/17), para. 326.

in the Legislative Guide to specifically address MSMEs and develop new and simplified mechanisms as required, taking into account the need for those mechanisms to be equitable, fast, flexible and cost efficient. The form the work might take should be decided at a later time based on the nature of the various solutions that were being developed.³

9. At its fifty-first session (New York, 10–19 May 2017), the Working Group held a preliminary discussion on how the work on this topic might be developed (A/CN.9/903, paras. 13–14). At its fifty-third session (New York, 7–11 May 2018), the Working Group had before it document A/CN.9/WG.V/WP.159, upon which it made various observations (A/CN.9/937, chapter VI). Based on that paper and those observations, a draft text on a simplified insolvency regime (A/CN.9/WG.V/WP.163) was presented to the Working Group at its fifty-fourth session (Vienna, 10–14 December 2018). At that session, the Working Group suggested revisions to that text (A/CN.9/966, chapter VI) and decided to focus on the needs of micro and small entities (MSEs) in the first instance (A/CN.9/966, para. 118), deferring the definition of such entities to States.

10. At its fifty-fifth session (New York, 28–31 May 2019), having completed its work on enterprise group insolvency, the Working Group had commenced detailed deliberations of features of a simplified insolvency regime, based on a note by the Secretariat (A/CN.9/WG.V/WP.166). Various views were expressed in the Working Group about the form that a text on MSE insolvency might take, whether it would be a supplement to the UNCITRAL Legislative Guide on Insolvency Law, a stand-alone document, a part of a compilation of UNCITRAL texts addressing the legal aspects of MSMEs throughout their life cycle or a list of principles applicable to a simplified insolvency regime that would supplement the texts of UNCITRAL Working Group I (MSMEs). A concern was expressed in the Working Group that the content and structure of a text on MSE insolvency might vary depending on its final form (A/CN.9/972, paras. 24–27, 31 and 58).

11. The Working Group deferred consideration of recommendations addressing out-of-court and hybrid debt restructuring negotiations until after it had considered recommendations on simplified in-court insolvency proceedings (A/CN.9/972, para. 39). The Working Group requested the Secretariat to add recommendations on a stay, simplified notification of creditors, simplified procedures for review and approval by creditors and courts, zero-asset proceedings, simplified liquidation and expedited proceedings (A/CN.9/972, paras. 40 (c) and 48) and revise other recommendations in the light of the deliberations at the session, when preparing a new text for consideration by the Working Group at its fifty-sixth session (A/CN.9/972, para. 58).

12. The Working Group was informed that the World Bank Group (WBG) was working in parallel with UNCITRAL on a standard that would address insolvency of MSEs (A/CN.9/972, para. 28). The Working Group was advised about the desirability of close coordination with UNCITRAL Working Group I (MSMEs) (A/CN.9/972, paras. 26 and 27).

13. At its fifty-second session, in 2019, the Commission expressed support for the Working Group to continue work on MSE insolvency and noted that the Working Group was of the view that more time for additional work, whether in session or between sessions, including consultations and the appropriate use of expert groups, might be needed to make progress on that work.⁴ The Commission was informed that informal consultations held on the margins of its session on 14 July 2019 revealed some preference for preparing a stand-alone comprehensive legislative guide on insolvency of MSEs. The Commission was further informed that the next round of intersessional informal consultations was scheduled for 2 to 3 September 2019 and that both in-person and remote participation would be possible. While

³ Ibid., *Seventy-first Session, Supplement No. 17 (A/71/17)*, para. 246.

⁴ Ibid., *Seventy-fourth Session, Supplement No. 17 (A/74/17)*, paras. 180 and 182.

support was expressed for holding intersessional informal consultations and expert group meetings, the need for endorsement by the Working Group of conclusions reached at those informal meetings was emphasized.⁵ At that session, the Commission also acknowledged the importance of coordinating the work of UNCITRAL with that of the World Bank while the World Bank was updating its Principles for Effective Insolvency and Creditor/Debtor Regimes in order to deal with specific aspects of the insolvency of MSEs.⁶

14. The Working Group may wish to note that informal consultations held on 2 to 3 September 2019 focused on draft recommendations on the scope, key objectives of a simplified insolvency regime, common features of a simplified insolvency regime, eligibility, application and commencement, features of simplified liquidation proceedings, features of simplified reorganization proceedings, conversion and modification of proceedings, treatment of personal guarantees, coordination of related proceedings, obligations of owners and managers of MSEs and out-of-court workouts. Views expressed during the informal consultations on 14 July 2019 and 2 to 3 September 2019 were taken into account in preparing a draft paper on a simplified insolvency regime for consideration by the Working Group at its fifty-sixth session (A/CN.9/WG.V/WP.168).

2. Documentation for the fifty-sixth session

15. The Working Group will have before it a note by the Secretariat on a simplified insolvency regime (A/CN.9/WG.V/WP.168).

16. States and interested organizations may wish to note the following background documents:

(a) The UNCITRAL Legislative Guide on Insolvency Law (2004), including parts three (2010) and four (2013) and [A/CN.9/990⁷](#);

(b) Reports of the Working Group on the work of its forty-fifth (New York, 21–25 April 2014), fifty-first (New York, 10–19 May 2017), fifty-third (New York, 7–11 May 2018), fifty-fourth (Vienna, 10–14 December 2018) and fifty-fifth (New York, 28–31 May 2019) sessions ([A/CN.9/803](#), [A/CN.9/903](#), [A/CN.9/937](#), [A/CN.9/966](#) and [A/CN.9/972](#));

(c) Notes by the Secretariat on insolvency of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises ([A/CN.9/WG.V/WP.121](#), [A/CN.9/WG.V/WP.147](#), [A/CN.9/WG.V/WP.159](#), [A/CN.9/WG.V/WP.163](#) and [A/CN.9/WG.V/WP.166](#)).

17. UNCITRAL documents and publications are posted on the UNCITRAL website (uncitral.un.org) upon their issuance in all the official languages of the United Nations. Delegates may wish to check the availability of the working papers by accessing the Working Group's page in the "Working Documents" section of the UNCITRAL website.

Item 5. Other business

18. The Working Group may wish to consider other issues within its mandate. In addition, the Working Group may wish to note that, at its fifty-second session, the Commission requested the Secretariat to organize a colloquium on civil asset tracing and recovery.⁸ The colloquium will take place on 6 December 2019 at the Vienna International Centre, from 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 a.m. and from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

19. The Working Group may also wish to note that its fifty-seventh session is scheduled to be held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, from 11 to 14 May 2020 (a four-day session), according to the decision made by the Commission

⁵ Ibid., para. 180.

⁶ Ibid., para. 183.

⁷ Ibid., para. 116.

⁸ Ibid., para. 221 (a) and chapter XXIII, section B.1.

at its fifty-second session, in 2019.⁹ The Working Group may wish to note that, at its fifty-second session, the Commission requested the Secretariat to organize a colloquium on applicable law in insolvency proceedings.¹⁰ That colloquium will take place on 15 May 2020, at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 to 6 p.m.

Item 6. Adoption of the report

20. The Working Group may wish to adopt, at the close of its session, a report for submission to the fifty-third session of the Commission to be held in New York, in July 2020. The report will include the main conclusions reached by the Working Group. Consistent with decisions taken by the Commission at its thirty-fourth session,¹¹ the substance of the Working Group's deliberations at its meeting on Thursday morning will be summarily read out for the record and subsequently incorporated into the report.

⁹ Ibid., chapter XXIII, section B.1.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid., *Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 17* and corrigendum (A/56/17 and Corr.3), para. 381.