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UNCITRAL regional presence

Note by the Secretariat

Activities of the UNCITRAL Regional Centre for Asia and the Pacific

1. Since the Commission's fifty-second session, the Regional Centre for Asia and the Pacific has carried out its activities in accordance with the priority lines of action identified in the UNCITRAL Secretariat's strategic framework for technical assistance (A/66/17, para. 255 and A/CN.9/724, paras. 10–48), as well as with the specific mandate identified for the Regional Centre. Those lines of action are to (a) support public, private and civil society initiatives to enhance international trade and development by promoting certainty in international commercial transactions through the dissemination of international trade norms and standards, in particular those elaborated by UNCITRAL; (b) provide capacity-building and technical assistance services to States in the region, including to international and regional organizations, and development banks; (c) build and participate in regionally-based international trade law partnerships and alliances, including with other appropriate United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies; (d) strengthen information, knowledge and statistics through briefings, workshops, seminars, publications, social media, and information and communication technologies, including in regional languages; and (e) function as a channel of communication between States and UNCITRAL for on-legislative activities of the Commission.

Promotion of the universal adoption of UNCITRAL instruments

Relevance to Sustainable Development Goals 1, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 16, and 17

2. The Regional Centre has continued to deliver its flagship activities during the reporting period with the objective of raising awareness and promoting effective understanding, adoption and use of UNCITRAL texts and establishing regular opportunities for substantive regional contributions to support the present and possible future legislative work of UNCITRAL:



Singapore Convention on Mediation signing ceremony and conference

(a) The signing ceremony for the United Nations Convention on International Settlement Agreements Resulting from Mediation (“Singapore Convention on Mediation”) (Singapore, 7 August 2019) was co-organized by UNCITRAL and the Singapore Ministry of Law.¹ Forty-six States signed the Singapore Convention on Mediation at the ceremony. The signing ceremony was followed by panels and break-out sessions on topics such as emerging issues relating to business, international trade law and dispute resolution, the rise of mediation as an alternative way to resolve dispute resolution and the future of international dispute resolution. More than 1,500 delegates from 70 jurisdictions participated in the event. An additional six States signed the Convention in the subsequent months (see, further, “New treaty actions and enactment of model laws”, paragraph 8(b) below).

(b) On 25 February 2020 Singapore and Fiji ratified the Convention followed by Qatar on 12 March 2020. Accordingly, the Singapore Convention on Mediation will enter into force on 12 September 2020.

Inaugural Incheon Law & Business Forum

(c) The inaugural UNCITRAL RCAP Incheon Law & Business Forum (Incheon, Republic of Korea, 18 September 2019), supported by the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Korea and Incheon Metropolitan City, was held with the theme “Challenges of Doing Business in the Digital Economy in Asia and the Pacific”. The Forum comprised two panels and one round table: (1) “New Frontiers in the Digital Economy,” an exploratory session on recent developments and challenges to diverse stakeholders in the digital economy; (2) “The Changing Legal Landscape” focusing on domestic and regional legal obstacles businesses face in adapting to new technologies and desirable legal frameworks; (3) round-table discussion on the disruptive impact of emerging technologies on commercial transactions, public policy considerations, and specific legal issues including recommendations for UNCITRAL’s existing instruments and possible development of new instruments. Approximately 50 stakeholders from business and legal sectors, international organizations, and government representatives across the Asia Pacific region participated.

ADR Special Session

(d) The ADR Special Session: “The Law and Practice of Arbitration and Mediation in Asia Pacific” (Seoul, 19 September 2019), which was organized by the Regional Centre and supported by the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Korea and KCAB International, provided capacity-building to government officials on UNCITRAL texts on international commercial arbitration and mediation, focusing on the Singapore Convention on Mediation and the UNCITRAL Model Law on International Commercial Mediation and International Settlement Agreements Resulting from Mediation, 2018 (amending the Model Law on International Commercial Conciliation, 2002). The event was attended by officials from 11 jurisdictions, i.e., Bahrain, China, Fiji, Indonesia, Myanmar, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vanuatu and Viet Nam, and twointergovernmental organizations, namely, the Mekong Institute and the International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries that collectively represented 15 developing and landlocked States in the Asia Pacific region.

¹ Further information is available at www.singaporeconvention.org/media/media-release/states-signed-international-treaty (last visited on 6 May 2020).

Asia Pacific ADR Conference

(e) The Asia Pacific ADR Conference (Seoul, 20 September 2019) (eighth edition), an annual regional conference, was co-hosted with the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Korea, KCAB International, Seoul International Dispute Resolution Centre and the International Chamber of Commerce. The conference raised awareness of UNCITRAL texts on dispute settlement, such as the Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards (New York, 1958) (the “New York Convention”) and the Singapore Convention on Mediation, among regional officials, experts, and academics. In addition, under the theme of “Ensuring Legitimacy, Delivering Efficiency: Procedural Trends and Potential Reforms in Dispute Resolution”, the conference discussed current areas of UNCITRAL work in investment arbitration and possible reforms to increase efficiency and legitimacy in the field of international commercial arbitration. The conference brought together approximately 250 experts from across the world.

UNCITRAL Asia Pacific Judicial Summit

(f) The third edition of the UNCITRAL Asia Pacific Judicial Summit (Hong Kong, China, 4–5 November 2019), a biennial event, was jointly hosted with the Department of Justice of Hong Kong, China and the Asian Academy of International Law with the theme “Deal-Making and Dispute Resolution in the Digital Economy – The Role of the Judiciary”. The Judicial Summit is one of the Regional Centre’s flagship events and part of its ongoing efforts to establish partnerships with judiciaries and judicial training institutions in the Asia Pacific region to further promote international awareness of UNCITRAL legal texts and facilitate uniform interpretation and application of those texts. The summit, featuring a Judicial Conference and a Judicial Roundtable, was attended by over 160 participants from approximately 30 jurisdictions in the Asia Pacific and beyond, including Bangladesh, China, Egypt, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Thailand and the United States of America. UNCITRAL texts discussed at the Judicial Conference included movable assets, security interests, and electronic commerce, while the Judicial Roundtable addressed the interpretation and application of the New York Convention and Singapore Convention on Mediation.

UNCITRAL Asia Pacific Day

(g) The UNCITRAL Asia Pacific Day, held during the last quarter of 2019 (sixth edition), aimed at promoting awareness and encouraging the study and discussion of UNCITRAL texts by legal scholars and students. Every year universities from across the region are invited to join the celebrations by hosting events ranging from brown-bag lunch discussions to international conferences. In 2019, a ground-breaking total of 17 universities and institutions hosted a collective 13 events in seven countries in the Asia Pacific region (China, India, Japan, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Thailand, and Viet Nam). A comprehensive range of UNCITRAL topics were covered including international commercial mediation, arbitration, micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), insolvency, judicial sale of ships, security interests, e-commerce, and the United Nations Convention on Contracts for the International Sale of Goods (CISG). For instance, the Regional Centre:

- (i) Presented UNCITRAL’s work on the digital economy to the students and faculty of the School of Economics, Zhejiang University of Technology and Hangzhou Normal University (Hangzhou, China, 30 October 2019);
- (ii) Introduced the work of UNCITRAL and current working groups to the students of Yonsei Law School (Seoul, 6 November 2019), Seoul National University Law School (Seoul, 12 November 2019), and the Department

of Industrial Security of Chung-Ang University (Seoul, 10 December 2019);

- (iii) Co-organized an international academic conference on cross-border insolvency with the Centre for Transnational Commercial Law, National Law University Delhi (New Delhi, 10–11 November 2019);
- (iv) Presented on UNCITRAL's work on international commercial arbitration and mediation via video to the University of Economics and Law and the Vietnam International Commercial Mediation Centre (Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam, 19 November 2019);
- (v) Presented on the Singapore Convention on Mediation via video to law students and legal experts at the event co-organized by the University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Mediation Centre and the International Dispute Resolution & Risk Management Institute (Hong Kong, China, 2 December 2019) and co-hosted an event on the same with the Center for Asian Legal Exchange, Nagoya University Graduate School of Law (Nagoya, Japan, 18 December 2019);
- (vi) Delivered presentations on UNCITRAL's work on dispute settlement, reducing legal obstacles for MSMEs and cross-border recognition of identity management and trust services during the Asia Pacific Day event of the University of Macau (Macao, China, 11 December 2019);
- (vii) Provided overviews of UNCITRAL's work on e-commerce and the Singapore Convention on Mediation via video at the event co-organized with the Gujarat National Law University and Gujarat Maritime University (Gujarat, India, 12–13 December 2019);
- (viii) Presented on the work of UNCITRAL and the Regional Centre, e-commerce and the Singapore Convention on Mediation via video to the School of Law, Far Eastern Federal University (Vladivostok, Russian Federation, 18 December 2019);
- (ix) Remotely presented on the CISG at the Asia Pacific Day event of Chulalongkorn University Faculty of Law (Bangkok, 19 December 2019).

3. In addition, the Regional Centre has delivered and supported the following events and initiatives aimed at raising awareness and promoting effective understanding, adoption and use of UNCITRAL texts, and thus legal certainty in international commercial transactions:

- (a) On UNCITRAL's mandate generally or with **cross-topic** focus:
 - (i) Introduced the legislative work and technical assistance activities of UNCITRAL to officials from the Ministry of Justice of Uzbekistan in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Korea (Yong-In, Republic of Korea, 29 August 2019);
 - (ii) Introduced and distributed material on the Singapore Convention on Mediation, UNCITRAL instruments on international commercial arbitration and e-commerce, the UNCITRAL Legislative Guide on Key Principles of a Business Registry (2019) (see A/CN.9/1032, para. 50) and Case Law on UNCITRAL Texts (CLOUT) to legal counsel at the 2019 Annual Conference of the International Bar Association to promote awareness on the work of UNCITRAL as an international legal framework enabling cross-border trade (Seoul, 24–25 September 2019);
 - (iii) Provided an overview of UNCITRAL and the Regional Centre's activities in technical assistance to the Office of the General Counsel, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) to facilitate collaboration and promote sustainable development in large-scale infrastructure in the region (Incheon, Republic of Korea, 1 November 2019);

(iv) Presented UNCITRAL's instruments on electronic commerce and its work on the digital economy to raise awareness among regional legal experts and encourage discussions of relevant practices that might be of benefit to the deliberations in Working Group IV, at the Law Asia Annual Conference (Hong Kong, China, 7 November 2019);

(v) Provided a substantive introduction on UNCITRAL instruments on dispute settlement, public procurement, and secured transactions to the Nepal Law Commission for its consideration and eventual recommendation for adoption to the Nepalese government, with the visit facilitated by the Korea Legal Research Institute (Incheon, Republic of Korea, 27 November 2019);

(vi) Presented on the Singapore Convention on Mediation, the Model Law on Secured Transactions, and UNCITRAL public procurement instruments to officials at the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to enhance ongoing collaboration in providing technical assistance to developing States in the Asia Pacific (Manila, 3 December 2019);

(vii) Introduced the work of UNCITRAL and the Regional Centre to the President of the International Association of Prosecutors and discussed possible collaboration on cross-border insolvency and asset tracing (Incheon, Republic of Korea, 30 January 2020).

(b) In the area of **dispute settlement**, the Regional Centre has co-organized, supported or participated in the following events and activities, focusing in particular on raising awareness of the Singapore Convention on Mediation and supporting UNCITRAL instruments on mediation:

(i) Presented on the Singapore Convention on Mediation at the Asia Alternative Dispute Resolution Week 2019 hosted by the Asian International Arbitration Centre (Kuala Lumpur, 27–29 June 2019);

(ii) Met with representatives of the National Policy Committee, Korean National Assembly to discuss mediation as an alternative dispute resolution mechanism and the Singapore Convention on Mediation as an instrument to facilitate the enforcement of settlement agreements resulting from mediation (Seoul, 4 July 2019);

(iii) Presented on the Singapore Convention on Mediation and provided institutional support to the 3rd Asia Pacific Mediation Conference organized by the Korean Society of Mediation Studies, the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Korea and the Korea International Trade Association (Seoul, 2 August 2019);

(iv) Provided institutional support to the Global Think Tank Event on the Singapore Convention on Mediation co-hosted by JAMS, the Society of Mediation Professionals and the Mediation Committee of the International Bar Association (Singapore, 8 August 2019);

(v) Presented on the Singapore Convention on Mediation and the Model Law on International Commercial Mediation and International Settlement Agreements Resulting from Mediation, 2018 (amending the Model Law on International Commercial Conciliation, 2002) at the 2019 Annual Conference of the International Bar Association (Seoul, 24–25 September 2019);

(vi) Presented on the Singapore Convention on Mediation at the V Pacific Law Forum organized by Far Eastern Federal University Law School (Vladivostok, Russian Federation, 3–4 October 2019);

(vii) Delivered opening remarks at the 4th Qianhai Legal Intelligence Forum with the theme “International Commercial Mediation: International Experience and Chinese Practice” (Shenzhen, China, 2 November 2019);

(viii) Delivered closing remarks at the Investment Law and Investor-State Mediation Training programme organized by the Department of Justice of Hong Kong, China, International Centre for Settlement of Investment

Disputes (ICSID) and Asian Academy of International Law (Hong Kong, China, 3 November 2019);

(ix) Presented on the Singapore Convention on Mediation and provided institutional support to the Shanghai International Arbitration Summit co-hosted by the Shanghai International Arbitration Centre, Shanghai Municipal Bureau of Justice and the Council for Promotion of International Trade Shanghai (Shanghai, China, 8 November 2019);

(x) Provided institutional support to the Young Arbitration Group Inaugural Conference organized by the Young Arbitration Group of the Centre for International Investment and Commercial Arbitration (Islamabad, 15–16 November 2019);

(xi) Presented on international commercial mediation via video at a joint workshop co-organized by the Vietnam Mediation Center and the International Dispute Resolution and Risk Management Institute (Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam, 21 November 2019);

(xii) Presented on the Singapore Convention on Mediation via video at an investment mediation seminar hosted by the China Electricity Council (Beijing, 27 November 2019);

(xiii) Presented on the Singapore Convention on Mediation and the Model Law on International Commercial Mediation and International Settlement Agreements Resulting from Mediation, 2018 (amending the Model Law on International Commercial Conciliation, 2002) at the 21st Annual Attorney-General's Conference (Nadadola, Fiji, 6–7 December 2019);

(xiv) Provided institutional support for the APRAG Conference 2020 organized by the Asia Pacific Regional Arbitration Group and Thailand Arbitration Centre with the theme “Innovations and Challenges Facing the Arbitration Industry” (Bangkok, 15–17 January 2020).

(c) In the area of **electronic commerce**, so as to promote the further adoption of relevant UNITRAL texts, the Regional Centre:

(i) Presented on the UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Transferable Records (2017) and the digitalization of cross-border trade including by MSMEs via remote participation at the ASEAN Business Advisory Council & Asia Pacific Financial Forum Seminar (Bangkok, 17 June 2019);

(ii) Introduced UNCITRAL texts as fundamental instruments to support the digital economy and provided institutional support to the 4th In-China Forum hosted by Incheon Metropolitan City (Incheon, Republic of Korea, 16 October 2019);

(iii) Delivered keynote speech at the 3rd Cross-Border E-Commerce and the Belt and Road International Trade Dispute Resolution Summit and introduced the UNCITRAL Technical Notes on Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) in the context of ODR for cross-border electronic commerce (Hangzhou, China, 29–30 October 2019);

(iv) Introduced the work of UNCITRAL on digital economy and discussions in Working Group IV to the students of Zhejiang University of Technology (Hangzhou, China, 30 October 2019);

(v) Presented on UNCITRAL e-commerce instruments at the 32nd LAWASIA Conference 2019 (Hong Kong, China, 7 November 2019).

(d) In the area of **security interests**, so as to promote the further adoption of relevant UNITRAL texts, the Regional Centre:

(i) Presented the UNCITRAL Model Law on Secured Transactions at the 2019 International Conference on Ease of Doing Business organized by the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Korea (Seoul, 29 November 2019);

(ii) Presented via video on UNCITRAL's work on secured transactions at the workshop during the APEC Ease of Doing Business First Senior Officials' Meeting and related meetings (Putrajaya, Malaysia, 15 February 2020).

(e) In the area of **sale of goods**, the Regional Centre has, through the following activities and events, continued to promote the wider adoption, use and uniform interpretation of the CISG:

(i) Presented at and supported the presence of a legal expert at the workshop co-organized with the Philippines Department of Justice on the possible ratification by the Philippines of the CISG and other UNCITRAL instruments (Manila, 2–3 December 2019);

(ii) Remotely presented at the inaugural UNCITRAL Asia Pacific Day of Thailand titled "Towards Modernization and Harmonization of International Sales Law: Challenges and Perspectives". In addition, the keynote address was delivered by the Chair of the fifty-second session of UNCITRAL (Bangkok, 19 December 2019).

Additional activities funded in full or in part by RCAP and carried out in the Asia-Pacific region are reported in A/CN.9/1032.

4. So as to support inclusivity in its activities, the Regional Centre has supported attendance of government officials from developing and, landlocked, and small island developing States ("SIDSs"), at UNCITRAL events, including government officials from Bahrain, Fiji, Indonesia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vanuatu, and Viet Nam, as well as representatives of regional intergovernmental think tanks and development agencies based in Mongolia and Thailand, to the Incheon Law and Business Forum, the ADR Special Session and the Asia Pacific ADR Conference held in September 2019.

Technical assistance and capacity-building

Relevance to Sustainable Development Goals 1, 8, 9, 10, and 16

5. In line with its specific mandate, the Regional Centre has also upon request and in some cases in coordination with various institutions as detailed in paragraph 6 below, provided technical assistance and capacity-building services to States in the Asia Pacific region, including to international and regional organizations and development banks:

(a) In the area of **dispute settlement**:

(i) Supported attendance of government officials, legal officers and judges, from developing, landlocked and small island States to various regional capacity-building conferences, judicial summits, and informal round tables;

(ii) Presented at the 21st Attorney-General's Conference to promote the signing and ratification of the Singapore Convention on Mediation (Fiji, 6–7 December 2019);

(iii) Provided technical assistance to the Government of Uzbekistan in reviewing its draft arbitration bill as based on the Model Law on International Commercial Arbitration (1985), with amendments as adopted in 2006;

(iv) Published UNCITRAL Bilingual Texts vol. 2 (English-Korean) in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Korea (March 2020).

(b) In the area of **security interests**:

(i) Presented via video on the UNCITRAL Model Law on Secured Transactions (2016) at a conference on movable asset finance organized by the International Finance Corporation of the World Bank Group (Myanmar, 9 December 2019).

(c) In the area of **public procurement**:

(i) Presented on the Model Law on Public Procurement (2011) and Legislative Guide on Public-Private Partnerships (2020) as tools in public procurement reform for delegates from the Indonesia Public Procurement Institute (Incheon, Republic of Korea, 20 November 2019).

(d) With **cross-subject focus**:

(i) Presented on the Singapore Convention on Mediation, UNCITRAL Arbitration Rules and the UNCITRAL Model Law on Public Procurement to representatives from the Nepal Law Commission and Korea Legislation Research Institute during their visit to the Regional Centre (Incheon, Republic of Korea, 27 November 2019);

(ii) Presented on three UNCITRAL treaties at the workshop co-organized with the Philippines Department of Justice on the possible ratification by the Philippines of the CISG, the United Nations Convention on the Use of Electronic Communications in International Contracts (New York, 2005) (“The Electronic Communications Convention”), and the Singapore Convention on Mediation (Manila, 2–3 December 2019).

Additional activities funded in full or in part by RCAP and carried out in the Asia-Pacific region are reported in A/CN.9/1032.

Coordination and communication

Relevance to Sustainable Development Goals 1, 8, 9, 10, 16, and 17

6. To further its coordination and cooperation with regionally-based international trade law partnerships and alliances, including with other appropriate United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies, the Regional Centre has continued systematic efforts with institutions active in trade law reforms, including the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (“UNESCAP”), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (“UNCTAD”), World Bank, AIIB and ADB, to provide technical assistance and capacity-building activities. In particular, the Regional Centre:

(a) In conjunction with UNCITRAL Secretariat based in Vienna pursued its technical engagement with UNESCAP in the context of the promotion and implementation of the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific, namely in relation to the Electronic Communications Convention and participated in the 7th meeting of the Legal and Technical Working Groups on Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation coordinated with UNESCAP (Bangkok, 14–16 January 2020);

(b) Collaborated with the ICC Representative Office, Shanghai, and ICC Arbitration and ADR, North Asia in organizing UNCITRAL Asia Pacific Day events with universities in China and Viet Nam;

(c) Met with AIIB general counsel at the Regional Centre to discuss cooperation in the fields of sustainable infrastructure financing and dispute resolution (Incheon, Republic of Korea, 1 November 2019);

(d) Presented on the Singapore Convention on Mediation, the UNCITRAL Model Law on Secured Transactions (2016), and UNCITRAL public procurement

instruments to ADB officials to enhance ongoing collaboration on providing technical assistance to developing States in the Asia Pacific region (Manila, 3 December 2019).

7. The Regional Centre has also served as a channel of communication for technical cooperation and assistance activities of the Commission with States in the region, setting up contact points within governments in the region and engaging in regular consultations with government officials.

New treaty actions and enactment of model laws

Relevance to Sustainable Development Goals 1, 9, 10, and 16

8. Following technical assistance activities and in its capacity as a channel of communication between States in the region, during the reporting period the Regional Centre has, in consultation and with the support of staff of the UNCITRAL secretariat, monitored the progress towards and assisted States in the adoption and implementation of the following UNCITRAL texts:²

(a) In the area of **international arbitration**:

(i) New York Convention: Papua New Guinea acceded to the New York Convention on 17 July 2019, Maldives acceded to the Convention on 17 September 2019, and Palau acceded to the Convention on 31 March 2020;

(ii) UNCITRAL Model Law on International Commercial Arbitration (1985), with amendments as adopted in 2006: Macao, China (2019) as well as Dubai International Financial Centre (2013) and Abu Dhabi Global Market (2015) in the United Arab Emirates (2018).

(b) In the area of **international commercial mediation**:

Singapore Convention on Mediation: Afghanistan, Brunei Darussalam, China, Fiji, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jordan, Kazakhstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Maldives, Palau, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste signed the Convention on 7 August 2019.

Singapore and Fiji ratified the Convention on 25 February 2020 and Qatar on 12 March 2020.

(c) In the area of **international sale of goods and related transactions**:

CISG: Lao People's Democratic Republic acceded to the CISG on 24 September 2019.

(d) In the area of **electronic commerce**:

United Nations Convention on the Use of Electronic Communications in International Contracts (New York, 2005): the Law on Electronic Commerce of Cambodia, promulgated in November 2019, is based on substantive provisions of the Convention.

UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Commerce (1996): in Thailand, the Electronic Transaction Act, B.E. 2544 (2001), based on the Model Law, has been amended by two legislations. The said two amendments are (1) Electronic Transaction Act (No. 3), B.E. 2562 (2019) and (2) Electronic Transaction Act (No. 4), B.E. 2562 (2019). In Cambodia, the Law on Electronic Commerce (2019), is based on both the Model Law and the Electronic Communications Convention noted above.

² See, further, Status of conventions and model laws, Note by the Secretariat, [A/CN.9/1020](#) (1 April 2020). This Note addresses the activities of the Regional Centre, including outcomes as relevant. The Status Note addresses status of the conventions and model laws emanating from the work of the Commission as a whole.

(e) In the area of **insolvency**:

UNCITRAL Model Law on Cross-Border Insolvency (1997): Dubai International Financial Centre, United Arab Emirates (2019) and Myanmar (2020).

(f) In the area of **security interests**:

UNCITRAL Model Law on Secured Transactions (2016).³ Legislation based on, or taking the same approach as, the Model Law has been adopted in Australia (2009), Fiji (2017), New Zealand (1999), Papua New Guinea (2011) and the Philippines (2018). The Secretariat is currently surveying the laws of other jurisdictions.

Outreach

Relevance to Sustainable Development Goals 4, 16, and 17

9. During the reporting period, the Regional Centre has served as a channel of communication between States and the UNCITRAL Secretariat and continued to expand the reach of its mandate through its national and regional educational programmes to maintain regular dialogue with non-governmental organizations, local and national political stakeholders, other international organizations, development banks, academia, the media and the general public on various aspects of the Regional Centre's work, to enhance cooperation and community support, and increase awareness of UNCITRAL activities:

(a) The Regional Centre participated in official receptions and meetings with various government officials and stakeholders, including the host Government of the Republic of Korea, governments in the region, United Nations agencies, intergovernmental organizations, international legal societies, dispute resolution centres, and institutions of higher learning;

(b) The Regional Centre has opened its doors to various visitors, including procurement lawyers from Indonesia as well as representatives from the Nepal Law Commission and the Korea Legislation Research Institute;

(c) Academic engagement was fostered by delivering public lectures, either in person or via video, at universities in the Asia Pacific region, including Hangzhou Normal University, University of Hong Kong, University of Macau, and Zhejiang University of Technology in China, National Law University Delhi, Gujarat National Law University, and Gujarat Maritime University in India, Nagoya University in Japan, Seoul National University, Chung-Ang University, and Yonsei University in the Republic of Korea, Far Eastern Federal University in the Russian Federation, Chulalongkorn University in Thailand, and the University of Economics and Law in Viet Nam;

(d) The Regional Centre has also engaged with States and international organizations to raise awareness and support capacity to participate in UNCITRAL investor-State dispute settlement (ISDS) reform discussions in Working Group III, including:

(i) At a workshop entitled "Negotiating and Reforming Investment Treaties: Enhancing the Capacity of LDCs and LICs in the Asia Pacific Region", in collaboration with the Myanmar Investment Commission, the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration and the Australian National University with the support of the Australian Government (Yangon, Myanmar, 9 August 2019);

(ii) Presented via video on ISDS reforms and Working Group III developments at the ICSID Regional Training Workshop 2019 co-hosted by ICSID and the

³ General Assembly resolution 71/136.

International Institute for Trade and Development (Bangkok, 26–28 September 2019);

(iii) Co-hosted an informal round table with the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Korea where 16 government officials from seven jurisdictions in the Asia Pacific (Australia, China, Japan, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Singapore, and Thailand) exchanged views on possible ISDS reform options (Seoul, 12–13 December 2019).

Resources and Funding

10. The costs of the Regional Centre's activities are not covered by the United Nations' regular budget, and are therefore contingent upon the availability of extrabudgetary funding. The Regional Centre relies on the annual financial contribution from the Incheon Metropolitan City to the Trust Fund for UNCITRAL Symposia to meet the cost of its operation and programme.

11. According to article 13.3 of the Memorandum of Understanding signed on 18 November 2011, between the United Nations, and the Ministry of Justice and Incheon Metropolitan City of the Republic of Korea, regarding the operation and financial contribution to the UNCITRAL Regional Centre for Asia and the Pacific, the Incheon Metropolitan City, in 2016, agreed to extend its financial contribution over a 5-year period (2017–2021) revising the annual contribution to USD 450,000.

12. The Regional Centre is staffed with one professional, one programme assistant, one team assistant and two legal experts. Its core project budget also allows for the occasional employment of experts and consultants. During this reporting period, 13 interns (9 female and 4 male) from 9 jurisdictions (Australia, Canada, China, Georgia, Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Thailand, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Viet Nam) were hosted at the Regional Centre. Staff and interns were involved in the International Organizations & MICE Career Fair jointly hosted by the Incheon Metropolitan City and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as the organization of the Asia Pacific Day academic events where the internship programme was introduced. The Regional Centre attracted applicants from all United Nations Regional Groups of Member States during the reporting period. In addition to geographical diversity, considering its scope of work it is highly desirable that the Regional Centre be able to attract a wide range of applicants who are proficient in regional languages, including those originating from States that have not yet been or are rarely represented in the internship programme. It is therefore suggested that States and observer organizations bring the possibility of applying for an internship at the Regional Centre to the attention of interested persons who meet these specific requirements, and since internships are unpaid, may also consider granting scholarships for the purpose of attracting those most qualified for an internship at the Regional Centre.

13. In addition to the financial contribution noted above, the Regional Centre relies on the non-reimbursable loan of legal experts by the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Korea and by the Government of Hong Kong, China. During the reporting period, the Regional Centre welcomed two new legal experts respectively in August 2019 and March 2020. It is expected that interest in UNCITRAL texts in the region will continue to grow with additional requests for technical assistance. Such an increase will call for a corresponding increase in available resources in the form of additional contributions to the Regional Centre or its projects from member States, or from interested private and public entities recommended by member States.

14. The sustainability of the Regional Centre which, as noted above is funded until 2021 by one main contributor, is at risk unless additional voluntary contributions are provided. The Commission may once again wish to appeal to all States, relevant United Nations Agencies and bodies, international organizations and other interested entities to make contributions to the Trust Fund for UNCITRAL Symposia, in the form of multi-year contributions so as to support and build on the activities of the

Regional Centre, as financing of special projects and otherwise to assist the UNCITRAL Secretariat in carrying out technical cooperation and assistance activities. The Commission may also wish to request Member States to assist the Secretariat in identifying sources of funding within their Governments.
