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UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON
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TRAINING AND ASSISTANCE

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The Commission, at its fourteenth session, 1/ agreed that it should continue to sponsor symposia and seminars on international trade law. It was considered desirable for these seminars to be organized on a regional basis. In this way, it was felt, a larger number of participants from a region could attend and the seminars would themselves help to promote the adoption of the texts emanating from the work of the Commission. The Commission welcomed the possibility that regional seminars might be sponsored jointly with regional organizations. The Secretariat was requested to make such arrangements as it found desirable in this regard. At its fifteenth session, 2/ the Commission considered the progress made by the Secretariat in organizing such symposia and seminars, and agreed that the Secretariat should continue to explore various possibilities of collaborating with other organizations and institutions in the organization of such symposia and seminars.

2. By its resolution 37/106 of 16 December 1982, the General Assembly reaffirmed the importance, in particular for the developing countries, of the work of the Commission concerned with training and assistance in the field of international trade law, and welcomed the initiatives being undertaken to sponsor regional symposia and seminars. The General Assembly also expressed its appreciation to those States that had made financial contributions to be used towards the financing of symposia and seminars and of other aspects of the training and assistance programme of the Commission, and to those Governments and institutions that were arranging symposia or seminars in the field of international trade law. Furthermore, the General Assembly invited Governments, relevant United Nations organs, institutions and individuals to assist the Secretariat in financing and organizing symposia and seminars.

1/ Report of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law on the work of its fourteenth session, Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 17 (A/36/17), para. 109.

2/ Report of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law on the work of its fifteenth session, Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 17 (A/37/17), para. 132.

3. The Secretariat co-operated with the Organization of American States (OAS) in the annual international law seminar held at Rio de Janeiro in August 1982, organized by the Inter-American Juridical Committee of the OAS. The seminar considered, inter alia, the activities of the Commission, and in particular the United Nations Convention on Contracts for the International Sale of Goods, Vienna, 1980 (hereinafter referred to as the Vienna Sales Convention).

4. In response to a suggestion made by the UNCITRAL Secretariat to the secretariat of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), the first CMEA regional seminar on UNCITRAL was organized by the CMEA (Moscow, 14-15 April 1983). The Convention on the Limitation Period in the International Sale of Goods, New York, 1974, and the Vienna Sales Convention were chosen as the subjects of the seminar because of the increasing interest in these Conventions throughout the world, and because their entry into force is foreseeable in the near future. The seminar was very well attended, and included as participants the heads of the legal departments of the Ministries of Foreign Trade of the countries belonging to the CMEA. The general conclusion at the seminar was strongly in favour of the two Conventions as an acceptable and workable compromise between the different approaches of national law in the areas covered by the Conventions. 3/

5. The Secretariat collaborated in a symposium (Baden bei Wien, 18-19 April 1983) organized jointly by the Economic University in Vienna, the Austrian Ministry of Justice and the Osterreichische Kontrollbank A.G. The symposium considered the Vienna Sales Convention, and its relationship to some civil law systems. The symposium included participants from Austria, Federal Republic of Germany, Hungary and Switzerland.

6. At its annual conference for 1983, the International Law Section of the American Bar Association will hold a symposium (Atlanta, 1 August 1983) on the Vienna Sales Convention. The Secretary of the Commission has been invited to participate in this symposium.

7. The Secretariat co-operated with the Regional Centre for Arbitration, Kuala Lumpur (established under the auspices of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee), in a seminar organized by the Centre (Kuala Lumpur, 2-3 November 1982). Among the subjects considered at this seminar were the conduct of institutional arbitrations under the rules of the Regional Centre (which rules are based on the UNCITRAL Arbitration Rules), ad hoc arbitration under the UNCITRAL Arbitration Rules, and the enforcement of arbitral awards under the Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards, New York, 1958.

8. The Secretariat participated in the VIIth International Arbitration Congress (Hamburg, 7-11 June 1982). The subjects discussed at that Congress included the activities of UNCITRAL in the field of arbitration, and in particular the UNCITRAL Conciliation Rules and the UNCITRAL project on a model arbitration law.

3/ A detailed report of this CMEA regional seminar will appear in one of the forthcoming issues of the United Nations Chronicle.

9. The Ibero-American Seminar on International Commercial Arbitration (Madrid, 13-15 December 1982) was organized by the Superior Council of the Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Navigation of Spain and the Inter-American Development Bank. It considered, inter alia, the UNCITRAL project on a model arbitration law.
10. The VIIIth Inter-American Conference on Commercial Arbitration (Santiago de Chile, 6-9 April 1983) was organized in co-operation with the UNCITRAL Secretariat. The Conference discussed extensively some of the activities of the Commission, such as the recommendations to assist arbitral institutions and other interested bodies with regard to arbitrations under the UNCITRAL Arbitration Rules and the UNCITRAL project on a model arbitration law.
11. A seminar will be organized for West Africa towards the end of 1983 at Abidjan by the Ivory Coast Chamber of Industry and the Institute of International Business Law and Practice of the International Chamber of Commerce, on the techniques of international commerce. This seminar will have the support of the UNCITRAL Secretariat and the Economic Community of West Africa. It will consider, inter alia, the role of uniform law in promoting international trade, and issues relating to international commercial arbitration. 4/
12. In addition to those seminars or symposia mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, there have been several occasions during the preceding year when the Secretariat was invited to make the work of UNCITRAL known. The Secretariat has been in contact with several organizations and some Governments with a view to exploring further possibilities of jointly organizing symposia or seminars. Organizations contacted include the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee, the Centre de Droit des Obligations, Louvain, Belgium, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the International Law Institute, Georgetown University Law Center, and the International Trade Centre, UNCTAD/GATT. While the principal limitation on the organization of symposia and seminars is that not enough funds are available for this purpose, the Secretariat will continue its efforts to explore all suitable opportunities for training and assistance and to make the work of UNCITRAL known. 5/
13. During the past year, three interns received training at the UNCITRAL Secretariat, and were associated with the work connected with on-going projects of the Commission.

4/ The Institute of International Business Law and Practice of the International Chamber of Commerce holds regular symposia and seminars on international trade law and practice, and it is the intention of the Secretariat to collaborate with the Institute, whenever it is considered advisable, when the symposia or seminars will be held in developing countries.

5/ With regard to the Hamburg Rules, the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Co-ordination of work: in general" (A/CN.9/239) notes that the Third Inter-American Specialized Conference on Private International Law (CIDIP-III) is likely to have an agenda item on international maritime transportation, which will focus on the Hamburg Rules. Furthermore, the Secretariat of UNCTAD is collaborating with the UNCITRAL Secretariat in the promotion of the Hamburg Rules, in particular because the entry into force of the United Nations Convention on International Multimodal Transport of Goods, Geneva, 1980, (which is based on preparatory work done by the UNCTAD Secretariat) is linked to the entry into force of the Hamburg Rules. Furthermore, the finalization of the UNIDROIT project for a draft Convention on the Liability of International Terminal Operators, intended to fill a gap in the uniformity of legal rules in the chain of events which takes place in the transport of goods from the shipper to the ultimate consignee, will enhance the attention paid to the Hamburg Rules.