



United Nations

Report of the International Law Commission

Fifty-fifth session

(5 May-6 June and 7 July-8 August 2003)

General Assembly

Official Records

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E. International Law Seminar

1. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 57/21, the thirty-ninth session of the International Law Seminar was held at the Palais des Nations from 7 July to 25 July 2003, during the present session of the Commission. The Seminar is intended for advanced students specializing in international law and for young professors or government officials pursuing an academic or diplomatic career or posts in the civil service in their country.
2. Twenty-four participants of different nationalities, mostly from developing countries, were able to take part in the session.¹ The participants in the Seminar observed plenary meetings of the Commission, attended specially arranged lectures, and participated in working groups on specific topics.
3. The Seminar was opened by the Chairman of the Commission, Mr. Enrique J.A. Candioti. Mr. Ulrich von Blumenthal, Senior Legal Officer of the United Nations Office at Geneva, was responsible for the administration, organization and conduct of the Seminar.
4. The following lectures were given by members of the Commission:
Mr. Victor Rodríguez Cedeño: “Unilateral Acts of States”; Mr. Pemmaraju Sreenivasa Rao: “Transboundary Harm arising from Hazardous Activities”; Mr. Djamchid Momtaz: “Mettre un terme à l’impunité”; Mr. John Dugard: “Diplomatic Protection”; Mr. Ian Brownlie: “The Work

¹ The following persons participated in the thirty-ninth session of the International Law Seminar: Ms. Sylvia Ama Adusu (Ghana); Mr. Mutlaq Al-Qahtani (Qatar); Ms. Karine Ardault (France); Mr. Bernard Bekale-Meviane (Gabon); Mr. David Berry (Canada); Ms. Laura Castro Grimaldo (Panama); Ms. Athina Chanaki (Greece); Ms. Namalimba Coelho Ferreira (Angola); Mr. Rolands Ezergailis (Latvia); Ms. Suraya Harun (Malaysia); Ms. Khin Oo Hlaing (Myanmar); Mr. Azad Jafarov (Azerbaijan); Ms. Tamar Kaplan (Israel); Mr. Norman Antonio Lizano Ortiz (Costa Rica); Ms. Yvonne Mendoke (Cameroon); Mr. Ngor Ndiaye (Senegal); Ms. Tabitha Wanyama Ouya (Kenya); Ms. Elena Paris (Romania); Mr. Juha Rainne (Finland); Mr. Luther Rangreji (India); Ms. Daniela Schlegel (Germany); Ms. Karolina Valladares Barahona (Nicaragua); Ms. Cristina Villarino Villa (Spain); Mr. Edgar Ynsfrán Ugarriza (Paraguay). A Selection Committee, under the Chairmanship of Professor Georges Abi-Saab (Honorary Professor, Graduate Institute of International Relations, Geneva), met on 8 April 2003 and selected 24 candidates out of 99 applications for participation in the Seminar.

of the International Court of Justice”; Mr. Giorgio Gaja: “Responsibility of International Organizations”; Mr. Chusei Yamada: “Shared Natural Resources”; Ms. Paula Escarameia: “Use of Force in International Law”; and Mr. Martti Koskenniemi: “Fragmentation of international law”.

5. Lectures were also given by Mr. George Korontzis, Senior Legal Officer, Office of Legal Affairs: “Some aspects of recent developments in the Law of Treaties”; Mr. Arnold Pronto, Legal Officer, Office of Legal Affairs: “The Work of the ILC”; Mr. Steven Wolfson, Senior Legal Officer, UNHCR: “International Refugee Law”; Ms. Jelena Pejic, Legal Adviser, ICRC: “Current Challenges to International Humanitarian Law”; and Mr. Gian Luca Burci, Senior Legal Officer, WHO: “The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control”.

6. Each Seminar participant was assigned to one of two working groups on “Unilateral acts of States” and “Fragmentation of international law”. The Special Rapporteurs of the ILC for these subjects, Mr. Victor Rodríguez Cedeño and Mr. Martti Koskenniemi, provided guidance for the working groups. The groups presented their findings to the Seminar. Each participant was also assigned to submit a written summary report on one of the lectures. A collection of the reports was compiled and distributed to all participants.

7. Participants were also given the opportunity to make use of the facilities of the United Nations Library.

8. The Republic and Canton of Geneva offered its traditional hospitality to the participants with a guided visit of the Alabama and Grand Council Rooms followed by a reception.

9. Mr. Enrique J.A. Candiotti, Chairman of the Commission, Mr. Sergei Ordzhonikidze, Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, Mr. Ulrich von Blumenthal, Director of the Seminar, and Ms. Cristina Villarino Villa, on behalf of the participants, addressed the Commission and the participants at the close of the Seminar. Each participant was presented with a certificate attesting to his or her participation in the thirty-ninth session of the Seminar.

10. The Commission noted with particular appreciation that the Governments of Austria, Cyprus, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Republic of Korea and Switzerland had made voluntary contributions to the United Nations Trust Fund for the International Law Seminar. The financial situation of the Fund allowed to award a sufficient number of fellowships to deserving candidates from developing countries in order to achieve adequate geographical distribution of participants. This year, full fellowships (travel and subsistence allowance) were awarded to 13 candidates and partial fellowship (subsistence or travel only) to 4 candidates.

11. Of the 879 participants, representing 154 nationalities, who have taken part in the Seminar since 1965, the year of its inception, 522 have received a fellowship.

12. The Commission stresses the importance it attaches to the sessions of the Seminar, which enables young lawyers, especially those from developing countries, to familiarize themselves with the work of the Commission and the activities of the many international organizations, which have their headquarters in Geneva. The Commission recommends that the General Assembly should again appeal to States to make voluntary contributions in order to secure the holding of the Seminar in 2004 with as broad participation as possible. While the number and level of fellowships could be maintained in 2003, the funding situation remains precarious. Increased financial support is required in order to allow the same number of fellowships as in the past.

13. The Commission noted with satisfaction that in 2003 comprehensive interpretation services were made available to the Seminar. It expresses the hope that the same services will be provided for the Seminar at the next session, within existing resources.

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