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F. International Law Seminar

375. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 62/66 of 6 December 2007, the forty-fourth session of the International Law Seminar was held at the Palais des Nations from 7 to 25 July 2008, 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 in posts in the civil service in their country.

376. Twenty-seven participants of different nationalities, from all the regions of the world, were able to take part in the session.⁷⁴⁰ The participants in the Seminar observed plenary meetings of the Commission, attended specially arranged lectures, and participated in working groups on specific topics.

377. The Seminar was opened by Mr. Edmundo Vargas Careño, Chairman of the Commission. Mr. Ulrich von Blumenthal, Senior Legal Adviser of the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG), was responsible for the administration, organization and conduct of the Seminar, assisted by Mr. Vittorio Mainetti, Legal Consultant at UNOG.

378. The following lectures were given by members of the Commission: Mr. Giorgio Gaja: “*Responsibility of International Organizations*”; Mr. Chusei Yamada: “*Codification of the Law of Shared Natural Resources*”; Mr. Enrique Candioti: “*Future Topics for the International Law Commission*”; Mr. John Dugard: “*The Outcomes of the Commission’s Work*”; Mr. Zdzislaw Galicki: “*The Obligation to Extradite or Prosecute (Aut dedere aut judicare)*”; Mr. Lucius Caflisch: “*The egal Regime of Maritime Wrecks*”; Ms. Marie Jacobsson: “*The Legal Regime of Historic Wrecks and of maritime graves*”; Mr. A. Rohan Perera: “*Towards a Comprehensive Convention on Terrorism*”; Mr. Donald McRae: “*The MFN Clause*”; Mr. Georg Nolte: “*Cultural Diversity in International Law*”; Judge Bruno Simma of the International Court of Justice and former member of the Commission, addressed the participants of the Seminar on: “*ILC and ICJ: A Symbiotic Relationship*”.

379. Lectures were also given by Mr. Vittorio Mainetti, Assistant to the Director of the International Law Seminar: “*Introduction to the Work of the International Law Commission*”; Mr. Daniel Müller, Assistant to the Special Rapporteur Mr. Alain Pellet: “*Reservations to Treaties*”; and Ms. Jelena Pejic, Legal Adviser of International Committee of the Red Cross: “*Current Challenges to International Humanitarian Law*”.

380. Seminar participants were invited to visit the World Trade Organization (WTO) and attended briefing sessions by Ms. Gabrielle Marceau, Counsellor to the Director General, and Mr. Werner Zdouc, Director of the WTO Appellate Body Secretariat. The discussion focused on the current legal issues at the WTO and on the WTO Disputes Settlement System.

⁷⁴⁰ The following persons participated in the forty-fourth session of the International Law Seminar: Ms. Adineh Abghari (Iran), Ms. Dace Apine (Latvia), Ms. Stacie-Anne Marie Brown (Jamaica), Ms. Lali Chin (Palau), Ms. Iryna Chyzheuskaya (Belarus), Mr. Juan Andrés Fuentes Véliz (Peru), Mr. Charlie Garnjana-Goonchorn (Thailand), Ms. Ruwanthika Gunaratne (Sri Lanka), Ms. Izevbuwa Ikimiukor (Nigeria), Ms. Ivana Jelić (Montenegro), Mr. Klaus Keller (Germany), Mr. Blaise Koïvogui (Guinea), Mr. Paavo Kotiaho (Finland), Mr. Toufik Koudri (Algeria), Ms. Siam Leabo (Ivory Coast), Ms. Helyati Mahmud Saedon (Brunei Darussalam), Ms. Rudo Makunike (Zimbabwe), Mr. Cláudio Mate (Mozambique), Mr. Thang Nguyen Dang (Viet Nam), Ms. Jeanette Sautner (Canada), Ms. Sabrina Urbinati (Italy), Mr. Gustavo Velasquez (Equator), Mr. Leandro Vieira Silva (Brazil), Mr. Andres Villegas Jaramillo (Colombia), Ms. Marise Warner (Trinidad and Tobago), Ms. Tahmina Yolchiyeva (Azerbaijan), Mr. Ahmed Zaki (Egypt), Mr. Gentian Zyberi (Albania). The Selection Committee, chaired by Ms. Vera Gowlland-Debbas (Professor at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies - Geneva), met on 29 April 2008 and selected 28 candidates out of 107 applications for participation in the Seminar. At the last minute, the twenty-eighth candidate selected failed to attend.

381. A special session dedicated to the “Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes” was organized in the premises of the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies of Geneva (HEID). Seminar participants attended lectures given by Mr. Marcelo Kohen: “*The Notion of Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes*”; Ms. Vera Gowlland-Debbas: “*The International Court of Justice As Principal Judicial Body of the United Nations*”; and Mr. Georges Abi-Saab (Member and former Chairman of the WTO Appellate Body): “*The Transformation of the Judicial Function*”.

382. Two Seminar working groups on “*The Obligation to Extradite or Prosecute*”, and “*Reservations to Treaties*” were organized. Each Seminar participant was assigned to one of them. Mr. Zdzislaw Galicki, a member of the Commission; and Mr. Daniel Müller provided guidance to the working groups. Each group wrote a report and presented their findings to the Seminar in a special session organized for this purpose. A collection of the reports was compiled and distributed to all participants.

383. The Republic and Canton of Geneva offered its traditional hospitality to the participants with a guided visit of the Alabama Room at the City Hall followed by a reception.

384. The Chairman of the Commission, the Director of the Seminar, Mr. Ulrich von Blumenthal and Ms. Adineh Abghari (Islamic Republic of Iran), 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 forty-fourth session of the Seminar.

385. The Commission noted with particular appreciation that during the last three years the Governments of Austria, China, Cyprus, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Mexico, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland had made voluntary contributions to the United Nations Trust Fund for the International Law Seminar. The financial situation of the Fund allowed awarding 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 16 candidates and partial fellowships (subsistence only) were awarded to 4 candidates.

386. Since 1965, 1,006 participants, representing 162 nationalities, have taken part in the Seminar. Of them, 618 have received a fellowship.

387. The Commission stresses the importance it attaches to the Seminar, which enables young lawyers, especially 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 2009 with as broad participation as possible.

388. The Commission noted with satisfaction that in 2008 comprehensive interpretation services were made available to the Seminar. It expresses the hope that the same services would be provided at the next session, within existing resources.