



**UNITED NATIONS
OFFICE OF LEGAL AFFAIRS**

International Law Commission

Statement

By

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Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Members of the International Law Commission,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me, first of all, Mr. Chairman, to warmly congratulate you and your colleagues of the bureau on their election. I wish you good luck and the best of success in carrying out your important duties.

It is a great pleasure to be here with you at the beginning of the current session of the Commission. As you know, this is a commemorative year for the United Nations. This coming September, the General Assembly will meet at its seventieth session to reaffirm its faith in the principles and purposes of the founding of the United Nations. The Assembly's function, as reflected in Article 13(1)(a) of the Charter of the United Nations, to conduct studies in the progressive development of international law and its codification, in which the Commission plays an important role, is very much ever present in today's environment.

Law is pivotal to society's well-being and international law guides us in our global village to interact with each other harmoniously. As is often stated, international law today is the language of international relations. In its work on many topics over the years, the Commission has contributed remarkably to enriching the vocabulary of that language.

This is the penultimate year of the present quinquennium. You will no doubt seek to complete work on some topics in the current programme of work, while sketching out the map for future action. Member States continue to look to the Commission for guidance on pressing issues concerning international law today.

I propose to continue the rich tradition of providing an overview of activities of a legal nature which the Office of Legal Affairs, in providing centralized legal services to the United Nations and its Member States, has been engaged in during a preceding year. These activities cut across the various parts of the Office of Legal Affairs, which I am privileged to head.

I will start with the activities of the Codification Division, your Secretariat, which also provides substantive servicing to the Sixth Committee. Thereafter, I will address the activities of other parts of OLA.

Mr. Chairman,

The information note that the Secretariat prepares in advance of your session already contains aspects of achievements of the Sixth Committee during the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly. The Committee began its work on 7 October and completed it on 14 November 2014, as was scheduled.

The General Assembly allocated to it 18 substantive and three procedural items, which revolved around three of the Organization's priorities, namely (a) the Promotion of justice and international law; (b) Drug control, crime prevention and combating international terrorism in all its forms and manifestations; and (c) Organizational, administrative and other matters. The Committee has maintained its more recent tradition of adopting all its resolutions and decisions without a vote.

Overall, the Committee adopted 18 resolutions and two decisions. This includes the United Nations Convention on Transparency in Treaty-based Investor-State Arbitration, otherwise known as the "Mauritius Convention on Transparency".

The Convention, elaborated in the context of the work of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), seeks to provide an efficient mechanism for States wishing to make the UNCITRAL Rules on Transparency adopted in 2013 and intended to apply to future investment treaties applicable to their existing investment treaties.

This work was undertaken in recognition of the need for provisions on transparency in the settlement of treaty-based investor-State disputes to take account of the public interest involved in such arbitrations. The Convention opened for signature at Port Louis, Mauritius on 17 March 2015 at a special ceremony which I attended. 8 States signed the Convention; two more have since joined. The Convention will enter into force six months after the deposit of the third instrument of ratification.

As is customary, the Sixth Committee also received and considered reports of commissions and committees, including the report of this Commission on its work last year. In the omnibus resolution 69/118, note was taken in particular of;

- (a) the completion of the second reading of the draft articles on the expulsion of aliens
- (b) the completion of the first reading of the draft articles on the protection of persons in the event of disasters; and
- (c) the completion of the work on the topic “The obligation to extradite or prosecute (aut dedere aut judicare)”. Given the completion of work on the topic “Expulsion of aliens”, resolution 69/119 was also adopted deciding to consider the matter further at the seventy-second session of the General Assembly.

The Committee also had deliberations over two items, namely “Effects of armed conflicts on treaties” and “Responsibility of international organizations”, which emanated from prior work of the Commission. On both items, the resolutions adopted, resolutions 69/125 and 69/126, respectively, place the items on the provisional agenda

of the seventy second session. The examination, *inter alia*, of the question of the form that might be given to the articles adopted by the Commission on both items still remains to be resolved among delegations.

The Committee also transacted business in the framework of working groups. The Working Group on the scope and application of the principle of universal jurisdiction continued its discussions, focusing on the various elements that were identified in the roadmap for discussion, including the definition, scope and conditions for the application of the principle of universal jurisdiction”.

Since the Working Group is still undertaking discussions on the matter, most of it still of a preliminary character, it is envisaged, in resolution 69/124, that another Working Group would be established during the seventieth session to continue work. It is still early to indicate what the outcome of work on this item would be.

The Working Group on Measures to eliminate international terrorism was established principally to address the outstanding issues concerning the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. As you know, this is a matter that is running into the fifteenth year now, without agreement being reached on how the exclusionary clauses concerning the scope of application should be formulated.

Considering that the Working Group on the item was unable to progress further on the outstanding issues, resolution 69/121 anticipates the establishment in this coming Fall of a working group with a view to finalizing the process on the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. Agreement on the text during the forthcoming commemorative session would no doubt be an important achievement for the international community.

Permit me to conclude this segment with some few remarks on the “Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law”, which is considered by the Sixth Committee annually and generates strong interest and support from Member States given the increasing demand for training, wider knowledge and dissemination of international law. As you know the Codification Division has continued the strengthening of its face-to-face international law training programmes, including by instituting cost-

saving measures to increase the number of fellowships available. The Audio-visual Library of International Law has also been enhanced.

This year, the Regional Course in International Law for Africa was conducted for the fifth consecutive year in Addis Ababa and the International Law Fellowship Programme will take place in The Hague this summer. I wish to express particular thanks to Germany for its very generous financial contribution toward holding the Regional Course in Addis Ababa this year.

The overall financial situation facing the Programme of Assistance is difficult and, unfortunately, as a result, in recent years, the Regional Courses for Asia-Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean, have not been held.

I do not hide my disappointment about this.

I believe the Regional Courses offer a great opportunity – at a low cost – for heightening awareness of and knowledge of international law. I know there is strong support for the Courses across the regional groups of Member States. I very much welcome and share this support.

Since taking up duty in 2013 I have stressed my personal commitment to the courses and have worked hard to raise voluntary funding. I have met formally and informally with Member States to explain that the Courses need to be put on a sustainable path.

Importantly, the General Assembly concluded last December that voluntary contributions have not proven to be a sustainable method for funding the activities under the Programme. It thus requested the Secretary-General to include additional resources for the Programme under the UN regular budget for the next biennium. The Secretary-General has acceded to this request.

Naturally, we must await the General Assembly's approval. However, we have now been given some hope that next year, for the first time, there will be sufficient resources to conduct the courses in all three regions.

I will now move on to the next segment, which will touch on some activities concerning the Office of the Legal Counsel.

It has been a very busy year in the Office of the Legal Counsel, which is always a good sign because it shows that we are consulted by the political decision-makers in the Secretariat, and in particular by the Secretary-General and his most senior advisers.

In the past year, the Office of the Legal Counsel took the lead in preparing very sensitive legal advice on many issues that made the headlines around the globe.

I wish to briefly mention two of those issues, but you will certainly understand that I will not be able to go into great detail. The first issue is the use of armed force. Our advice on the legality of the use of armed force was recently sought in two situations:

(1) the airstrikes against ISIS or Daesh in the Syrian Arab Republic by a coalition led by the United States and involving the United Kingdom, Jordan and others; and

(2) the airstrikes by a coalition of Arab States led by Saudi Arabia against Houthi forces in Yemen.

The two situations seem very similar. However, the legal rules involved were very different.

The airstrikes against ISIS in Syria involved the invocation by the countries concerned of the right to collective self-defence under Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. The analysis advanced was that Iraq was being attacked by ISIS fighters invading from the territory of Syria and that Iraq requested military support in defending itself against this armed attack.

In Yemen, the legal basis was not Article 51. The airstrikes were rather covered by the right of the legitimate Government of Yemen under President Hadi to request military support in fighting an insurgency.

The other sensitive issue that I only wish to mention briefly is the work of the Gaza Board of Inquiry.

In July 2014, the Israeli Defence Forces launched “Operation Protective Edge” in the Gaza Strip.

The Operation consisted, in its initial phase, in an aerial campaign, supplemented later by a ground deployment.

During the Operation, a number of incidents occurred in which UNRWA schools were hit or otherwise sustained damage.

In several cases, the schools were being used as emergency shelters at the time and persons who were present on the premises were killed or sustained injuries.

At three UNRWA schools that were not being used as shelters and that were empty at the time, weaponry was discovered.

After the conflict had ceased, the Secretary-General decided to establish a United Nations Headquarters Board of Inquiry to investigate ten of these incidents -- seven in which deaths or injuries and damage occurred at United Nations premises and the cases of the three schools at which weaponry was found. The Board was headed by a former Military Adviser and Chief of Staff of the Dutch Marines and also comprised experts in law, political affairs, munitions and security.

The Board submitted its report to the Secretary-General in February and a summary was made public about a week ago.

As with every Board of Inquiry, the Board was not a judicial body and was not tasked with making legal findings. Indeed, it was barred from doing so. However, the events that the Board has investigated clearly have legal implications for the Organization.

The Office of the Legal Counsel is carefully reviewing the Board's report with a view to identifying what claims the Organization might make for reparation for the losses that it sustained in seven of the incidents that fell within the Board's remit.

You may recall that the United Nations presented claims against Israel in 2009 regarding the losses that it sustained in several of incidents that had occurred during Israel's "Operation Cast Lead" in December 2008 to January 2009 and that had been the subject of a very similar Board of Inquiry.

You may also recall that the Government of Israel and the United Nations reached a settlement of those claims, without prejudice to each other's positions on whether or not Israel bore responsibility in law for the losses that the Organization had sustained.

Mr. Chairman,

The last topics that I wish to address with regard to the work of the Office of the Legal Counsel are the latest developments with regard to ensuring accountability for international crimes.

In view of time constraints, I propose to focus only our efforts to establish accountability mechanisms in Syria, the Central African Republic and in South Sudan.

In Syria, as is well known, the scale of crimes is exceptionally shocking. The UN's Commission of Inquiry, led by Paulo Pinheiro, has described in detail the systematic and widespread nature of the atrocities committed. Recently, Mr. Pinheiro stressed the regional dimension of these atrocities and how the most vulnerable segments of the population are targeted by Government and anti-Government forces as well as terrorist groups. How could we not agree that there is an obligation, not only to bring this war to an end, but also to hold the perpetrators of these atrocities to account.

In a number of countries, domestic proceedings have advanced against perpetrators of serious crimes. That is a welcome, though necessarily partial, step.

At the international level, too often, the calls for accountability remain unheeded, due to the lack of political will or consensus among Member States or, even, due to a deadlock in the Security Council. Syria has fallen victim to this dynamic.

Too often, also, the perception that a political solution should come first pushes further away any discussion or serious consideration of accountability measures.

In at least two crucial situations, the UN and willing Member States are currently seeking to make a difference.

The first is the Central African Republic, where the UN peacekeeping mission, MINUSCA, will be providing support to a special criminal court within the national judicial system, under a memorandum of understanding signed in August 2014 with the CAR Authorities.

This memorandum of understanding was adopted following a resolution of the Security Council allowing MINUSCA to take urgent temporary measures to maintain basic law and order and fight impunity in the CAR, “within the limits of its capacities and areas of deployment, in areas where national security forces are not present or operational”.

The memorandum of understanding includes the agreement of MINUSCA and the CAR that - consistent with its mandate - MINUSCA has the authority to arrest and detain individuals in the CAR, and collect and keep evidence of crimes committed.

The urgent temporary measures have thus given rise to new and interesting challenges both from the perspective of UN peacekeeping and from the point of view of criminal justice.

A law establishing the Special Criminal Court was adopted a few days ago by the CAR Transitional Parliament. In the UN’s view, this law does not fully conform to the standards envisaged in the Memorandum between MINUSCA and the CAR

Authorities.

Among other issues, internationally-recruited magistrates do not have a majority in all the stages of proceedings. Nonetheless, to the extent that the law does not cross the UN's baseline standards for the provision of assistance, including the fact that it does not include the death penalty nor measures of amnesty for international crimes or serious human rights violations, the UN has concluded that it is not in principle precluded from providing appropriate support to the Special Criminal Court.

Throughout the process, it was essential to ensure MINUSCA's exclusively international character and, at the same time, to preserve the national ownership of the Special Criminal Court and the independence of its personnel.

I stress, in this connection, that the CAR Special Criminal Court is not a hybrid court. While the United Nations, through MINUSCA, will provide assistance to it, the United Nations will not be a part of it.

I should also stress that the law establishing the Special CAR Criminal Court provides that its jurisdiction is without prejudice to the competence of the International Criminal Court, which has opened two investigations in the Central African Republic.

Another area of major concern for the United Nations has been the conflict which erupted in South Sudan roughly two years after its independence, in mid-December 2013. The Security Council has since expressed grave concern at reports of serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in that country, including extrajudicial killings, ethnically targeted violence, rape and other forms of sexual and gender-based violence.

It has also stressed the need to bring to justice perpetrators of such crimes, while "taking note of the important role international investigations, and where appropriate, prosecutions can play (...)".

Last year, the African Union appointed a Commission of Inquiry into the situation in South Sudan. President Obasanjo, chairing the Commission, has stressed the importance and the centrality of the report's recommendations on accountability. Regrettably, this report was not taken up for consideration at the AU's Summit in late January and the Commission's recommendations remain unknown to the United Nations.

Meanwhile, an important step was reached on 1 February 2015, through the IGAD mediation process. The two major parties to the conflict agreed, in principle, to the establishment of an "independent hybrid judicial body" to prosecute those with greatest responsibility for violations of international humanitarian law and South Sudanese law since December 2013. Other than noting that South Sudanese and eminent African jurists should participate, no further detail has yet been articulated publicly.

Building upon this momentum, in February, the Secretary-General advised the Security Council that the UN Secretariat was engaged in developing possible options for criminal accountability and transitional justice processes for South Sudan.

While these options are not yet finalized, the ICC would in all likelihood remain a preferred option for the United Nations. At the same time, even if the ICC were to be seized of the situation in South Sudan through a Security Council resolution or through acceptance by South Sudan of the Court's jurisdiction, it could only handle prosecutions and trials of a very limited number of alleged perpetrators.

The lack of national accountability measures in South Sudan, to date, will inevitably lead to deeper consideration of an "independent hybrid judicial body" as mentioned in the 1st of February Agreement. Highly relevant is whether the political and security situation within the country would permit the location of such a body in South Sudan, or whether third States would need to be considered as hosts.

The degree to which South Sudanese investigative, prosecutorial and judicial capacities would form part of a hybrid mechanism is currently difficult to assess.

It may be that adaptations of existing mechanisms are preferable to creating entirely new architectures. Lastly but fundamentally, assuring a sustainable funding basis for such a project will be an essential consideration.

Using these three recent examples, I have attempted to show how an international or regional involvement in national justice processes can prove another, significant avenue for addressing serious crimes of international concern. This is in complementarity with concurrent justice processes, including any proceedings of the international criminal court.

Societies traumatized by gross violations of human rights yearn for all of us, legal practitioners, at our respective levels and in our respective roles, to contribute in some form or another to the fight against impunity ... for accountability, transparency, security and justice to prevail.

We must continue to heed these calls, by pressing for justice to be done or actively contributing to it, while remaining aware of the challenges ahead.

I shall now address the activities of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of Legal Affairs. The law of the sea has continued to develop within the framework of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea to adjust to new developments and evolving circumstances. For over more than thirty years, the Convention, which codifies and progressively develops the law of the sea, has provided stability and certainty in that area of the law. To date, there are 167 parties, including the European Union, to the Convention, one more than reported last year.

In order to achieve universal participation, the General Assembly resolution 69/245, on Oceans and the law of the sea, once again called upon all States to become parties to the Convention and its Implementing Agreements.

The implementation of the Convention and related Agreements, as well as the

ever evolving and mutating legal framework for the oceans, places a significant capacity burden on States. The importance of this cannot be underestimated, as the full and complete implementation of this legal regime is the bedrock upon which peace and security in the oceans is built, which in turn is the precondition for deriving benefits from ocean-based economies as engines of sustainable development.

The Division continues to meet the growing demand by States with respect to technical cooperation and capacity-development, through various programmes of assistance, fellowship programmes and trust funds.

Among some of the activities concerning the Division during this period, I wish to note that this year, one of the two treaties adopted to implement the Convention, the 1995 United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement, marks its twentieth anniversary of its adoption and its opening for signature. A panel discussion was held at the eleventh round of informal consultations of States Parties this March to commemorate that anniversary.

Also this year, the Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group established by the General Assembly to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction has completed its work by recommending that the General Assembly decide to develop an international legally-binding instrument under the Convention on that issue. To this end, the Working Group recommended that the General Assembly decide to establish a preparatory committee, to make substantive recommendations to the Assembly on the elements of a draft text of such an instrument, with work envisaged to start in 2016 and to report back to the Assembly by the end of 2017.

Additionally, the Regular Process for global reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment, including socioeconomic aspects will end its first five-year cycle later this year with the completion of the first global integrated marine assessment and the submission of its summary to the General Assembly for its approval at its seventieth session.

Against the background of the ongoing discussions on the post-2015

development agenda, this year's meeting of the General Assembly's Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, held in early April, discussed Oceans and sustainable development. The focus was on the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, namely, the environmental, the social and the economic.

Finally, the Division has continued to provide substantive servicing to the Meeting of States Parties to the Convention and the Commission on the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS). The workload of the Commission has continued to grow.

In the past twelve months, the Commission has received several new submissions pertaining to the delineation of the outer limit of the continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles from the baselines, bringing the total number of submissions to 79, including two revised submissions. It may be noted that areas covered by submissions to the Commission continue to expand and they include regions, such as the Arctic region, which are at the centre of the public's attention. The Commission has to date issued 22 recommendations.

J'aimerais maintenant, en passant à la langue française, donner un aperçu du travail des Nations Unies dans le domaine de l'administration de la justice. Le Tribunal du contentieux administratif des Nations Unies et le Tribunal d'appel des Nations Unies, établis tous les deux le 1er juillet 2009, achèvent bientôt leur sixième année d'exercice.

La Division des questions juridiques générales du Bureau des affaires juridiques joue un rôle clé, de conseil, dans l'élaboration des politiques de l'Organisation en matière d'administration et de gestion du personnel. Elle représente par ailleurs le Secrétaire général dans toutes les affaires pendantes devant le Tribunal d'appel des Nations Unies.

Au 2 avril 2015, le Tribunal du contentieux administratif avait rendu 1,101 jugements, et le Tribunal d'appel 495 jugements. La jurisprudence de ces deux tribunaux continue de contribuer à développer le droit administratif international.

J'aborde maintenant les activités de la Division du droit commercial international, basée à Vienne, qui assure le secrétariat de la Commission des Nations Unies pour le droit commercial international, la CNUDCI. Le programme législatif actuel de la CNUDCI comporte notamment des travaux sur le droit des sociétés appliqué aux micro-, petites et moyennes entreprises (ce sujet ayant été ajouté au programme de travail de la CNUDCI en 2013), sur l'arbitrage et la conciliation dans le domaine commercial, sur le règlement en ligne des différends, le commerce électronique, le régime de l'insolvabilité, et le droit des sûretés.

Outre l'adoption de la Convention de Maurice sur la transparence dont j'ai dit quelques mots au début de cet exposé, je note que la CNUDCI, au mois de mars dernier, a co-organisé avec la Banque mondiale et l'association non gouvernementale INSOL, qui regroupe des professionnels des procédures collectives en matière de faillite et de restructuration d'entreprises, son onzième colloque judiciaire international sur les aspects trans-frontaliers de l'insolvabilité.

Plus de soixante-dix magistrats et praticiens spécialisés en provenance de plus de quarante États différents ont assisté à cette rencontre de deux jours pour discuter des développements récents dans ce domaine et confronter leurs expériences et leurs pratiques.

Par ailleurs, la CNUDCI commémore cette année le trente-cinquième anniversaire de la Convention des Nations Unies sur les contrats de vente internationale de marchandises. Outre une séance spéciale prévue durant la session de la Commission qui se tiendra à Vienne au mois de juillet prochain, des conférences régionales auront lieu tout au long de l'année dans le monde pour examiner la pratique de cette convention et discuter de l'avenir du droit uniforme des contrats.

Au cours de sa session de juillet, la CNUDCI entendra divers rapports sur l'état d'avancement des travaux des six groupes de travail actuellement chargés des projets législatifs que j'ai mentionnés tout à l'heure.

Elle aura également l'occasion d'entendre son secrétariat sur les questions

soulevées par la mise en oeuvre de ses programmes d'assistance technique, lesquels, outre ces thèmes législatifs, ont porté sur le droit des marchés publics, le droit des contrats internationaux, le droit des transports et la fraude commerciale. La Commission discutera enfin des moyens de promouvoir une interprétation et une application uniformes des normes et standards élaborés par la CNUDCI, de faciliter l'entrée effective de ces textes dans le droit positif des États, d'encourager la coopération entre la CNUDCI et les autres organisations internationales concernées, et de mieux assurer leur coordination.

La question de la prise en compte de l'état de droit dans le programme de développement pour l'après-2015 sera également évoquée.

Pour terminer, je voudrais vous parler du travail de la Section des traités qui, comme vous le savez, exerce les fonctions dépositaires du Secrétaire général pour plus de 560 traités multilatéraux et est également en charge de l'enregistrement et la publication des accords internationaux conformément à l'article 102 de la Charte. Au fil des ans, la pratique en matière de traités s'est considérablement accrue et la Section des traités continue de fournir une assistance technique et consultative sur le droit et la pratique des traités.

Récemment, le Secrétaire général s'est vu confier les fonctions dépositaires relatives à la Convention sur la transparence dans l'arbitrage mentionnée précédemment.

En outre, depuis le mois d'avril 2014, cinq traités multilatéraux déposés auprès du Secrétaire général sont entrés en vigueur – dont un qui est le fruit du travail de la présente Commission - à savoir la Convention sur le droit relatif aux utilisations des cours d'eau internationaux à des fins autres que la navigation, qui est entrée en vigueur dans le courant du mois d'août 2014. Les quatre autres traités sont

(a) le Protocole facultatif à la Convention relative aux droits de l'enfant établissant une procédure de présentation de communications;

(b) l'Amendement à la Convention sur l'évaluation de l'impact sur

l'environnement dans un contexte transfrontière;

(c) le Protocole de Nagoya sur l'accès aux ressources génétiques et le partage juste et équitable des avantages découlant de leur utilisation relatif à la Convention sur la diversité biologique ; et enfin

(d) le Traité sur le commerce des armes.

Les conditions d'entrée en vigueur du Traité sur le commerce des armes furent d'ailleurs remplies à l'occasion de la Cérémonie des traités de l'année 2014, organisée par la Section et qui rencontra un franc succès. Lors de cette cérémonie, pas moins de 52 États ont accompli un total de 81 actions relatives aux traités déposés auprès du Secrétaire général. Dans la droite ligne de cette fructueuse tradition, la Cérémonie des traités sera à nouveau organisée cette année, concomitamment au Débat général de la 70ème session de l'Assemblée générale.

L'année qui s'est écoulée vit également l'adhésion de l'État de Palestine à plusieurs traités déposés auprès du Secrétaire général. Comme vous vous en souvenez sans doute, au mois d'avril 2014, la Palestine avait déjà déposé des instruments d'adhésion à quatorze desdits traités.

En janvier 2015, elle a procédé au dépôt d'instruments d'adhésion relatifs à seize autres traités, dont le Statut de Rome de la Cour pénale internationale. Les clauses de participation desdits traités, il convient de le préciser, peuvent être classées en deux catégories : certaines d'entre elles appliquent la formule dite « de Vienne », alors que d'autres envisagent la participation au traité de « tout État ».

Les instruments d'adhésion de la Palestine aux traités de la première catégorie ont pu être acceptés en dépôt en raison du fait que la Palestine est un membre de l'UNESCO. Quant aux traités ouverts à tous les États, le Secrétaire général a respecté sa pratique depositaire bien établie en suivant la détermination de l'Assemblée générale concernant le statut d'État d'une entité donnée. Les instruments de la Palestine ont dès lors été acceptés en dépôt compte tenu du fait que la Palestine s'est vue accorder le statut d'État non membre observateur par la résolution 67/19.

Le travail de la Commission continue d'être du plus grand intérêt pour la communauté juridique internationale, et tout particulièrement pour les États membres en son sein.

Chaque année, dans sa résolution sur le rapport annuel de la Commission, l'Assemblée générale se félicite des efforts de la Commission pour améliorer ses méthodes de travail et l'encourage à persévérer dans cette voie. La manière dont la Commission interagit avec la Sixième Commission, ainsi que les moyens permettant de rendre ses travaux plus aisément accessibles, sont des questions d'un intérêt tout particulier pour les délégations.

Ces impératifs doivent de toute évidence être adaptés en fonction de la « nouvelle normalité » dans laquelle nous vivons aujourd'hui. Celle-ci implique que nous fassions d'avantage avec moins, notamment en termes de ressources, tout en gardant à l'esprit les intérêts de la Commission en tant que corps d'experts indépendants.

Alors que la Commission cherche à remplir le mandat qui lui a été confié par l'Assemblée générale dans un environnement changeant en adoptant ses méthodes de travail pour relever les nouveaux défis qui se présentent à elle, je voudrais lui renouveler mon assurance que le Bureau des affaires juridiques fera tout son possible pour lui fournir l'assistance nécessaire.

En particulier, je peux vous promettre que la Division de la codification, qui lui prête main-forte en assurant un service de secrétariat substantiel depuis toutes ces années, continuera d'exercer ses fonctions avec la plus grande diligence, le plus grand professionnalisme et le plus entier dévouement.

Je vous remercie de votre attention.