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Strengthening and promoting the international treaty framework

Report of the Sixth Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Solomon **Korbieh** (Ghana)

I. Introduction

1. The item entitled “Strengthening and promoting the international treaty framework” was included in the provisional agenda of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly pursuant to Assembly resolution [73/210](#) of 20 December 2018.
2. At its 2nd plenary meeting, on 18 September 2020, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include the item in its agenda and to allocate it to the Sixth Committee.
3. The Sixth Committee considered the item at its 6th, 7th and 19th meetings, on 15 and 19 October and 19 November 2020. The views of the representatives who spoke during the Committee’s consideration of the item are reflected in the relevant summary records.¹
4. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the report of the Secretary-General ([A/75/136](#)).

II. Consideration of draft resolution [A/C.6/75/L.15](#)

5. At the 19th meeting, on 19 November, the representative of Singapore, on behalf of the Bureau, introduced a draft resolution entitled “Strengthening and promoting the international treaty framework” ([A/C.6/75/L.15](#)).
6. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution [A/C.6/75/L.15](#) without a vote (see para. 8).
7. Before the adoption of the draft resolution, the representative of Spain made a statement in explanation of position. After the adoption of the draft resolution, the representatives of Egypt and Turkey made statements in explanation of position.

¹ [A/C.6/75/SR.6](#), [A/C.6/75/SR.7](#) and [A/C.6/75/SR.19](#).



III. Recommendation of the Sixth Committee

8. The Sixth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Strengthening and promoting the international treaty framework

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions [23 \(I\)](#) of 10 February 1946, [97 \(I\)](#) of 14 December 1946, [364 B \(IV\)](#) of 1 December 1949, [482 \(V\)](#) of 12 December 1950, [32/144](#) of 16 December 1977, [33/141 A](#) of 19 December 1978, [51/158](#) of 16 December 1996 and [73/210](#) of 20 December 2018,

Recalling also its resolutions [71/328](#) of 11 September 2017 and [73/346](#) of 16 September 2019, which reaffirm that multilingualism is a core value of the Organization that contributes to the achievement of the goals of the United Nations, and requesting the Secretary-General to continue to make efforts to ensure that multilingualism is not undermined by the measures taken in response to the liquidity situation and the coronavirus disease (COVID-19),

Conscious of the obligations resulting from Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations and the importance of treaties in the development of international law and the international legal order,

Noting with appreciation the role of the Secretariat, in particular the Treaty Section of the Office of Legal Affairs, in the implementation of Article 102 of the Charter,

Noting that the considerable increase in the number of treaties submitted for registration over the past years has led to the growth in the volume of work carried out by the Treaty Section, contributing to the accumulation of unpublished treaties,

Noting also that, while the authentic texts of registered treaties are promptly made available online through the electronic treaty database, there is currently a significant backlog in the publication of the United Nations *Treaty Series* due to growing delays in the translation of treaties related, inter alia, to the limited resources available for the publication process,

Recognizing the importance of the expeditious processing, registration and publication of treaties and treaty-related actions,

Supporting the efforts of the Secretary-General to increase the efficiency of the registration and publication process within available resources and to enhance the role played by the Treaty Section in assisting Member States in this area,

Welcoming the measures taken by the Treaty Section to expedite the publication of the United Nations *Treaty Series* and to provide electronic access to all of its publications on the website of the United Nations Treaty Collection, and recognizing the role that new technology can play in the accessibility of the United Nations *Treaty Series*,

Recognizing that practice and technology have developed considerably over the past years, and acknowledging the importance of maintaining consistency with treaty-making practice in the international community,

Bearing in mind the provisions of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties,¹ and considering its adoption on 22 May 1969 by the United Nations Conference on the Law of Treaties,

Convinced of the need to further gather and exchange views on practice relating to the strengthening and promoting of the international treaty framework,

1. *Recalls* Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations, reaffirms the importance of the registration and publication of treaties, as well as their accessibility, and stresses that the regulations to give effect to Article 102 should be useful and relevant to Member States and should be kept updated to assist States in implementing their obligations thereunder;

2. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General entitled “Review of the regulations to give effect to Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations”,² submitted pursuant to its resolution 73/210, and of the recommendations contained therein for consideration by the General Assembly;

3. *Notes* that some Member States continue to consider that there remain outstanding issues where the regulations may need further consideration or possible updating;

4. *Reaffirms its support* for the annual treaty event organized by the Secretary-General;

5. *Welcomes* the organization of workshops on treaty law and practice by the Treaty Section at Headquarters and at the national and regional levels as an important capacity-building initiative, encourages the Treaty Section to continue to organize these workshops as regularly as possible, including through the use of information and communications technology when necessary owing to extraordinary circumstances, and invites States and interested international organizations and institutions to continue to support this activity;

6. *Also welcomes* efforts to build the capacity of States in treaty law and practice, and invites Member States to consider providing targeted technical assistance, upon request, at the bilateral, regional and multilateral levels, in particular to developing countries, in order to develop and enhance their treaty practice, including in the use of information and communications technology;

7. *Further welcomes* the efforts made to develop and enhance the United Nations electronic treaty database, which provides online access to comprehensive information on the depositary functions of the Secretary-General and the registration and publication of treaties under Article 102 of the Charter, and encourages the continuation of such efforts in the future, while bearing in mind the challenges that many developing countries face in accessing information and communications technology;

8. *Notes* that most submissions of treaties for registration are in electronic format, and encourages the Secretary-General to develop, in consultation with and on the basis of feedback from Member States and within existing resources, an online treaty registration system to facilitate submissions of treaties for registration, as an additional option to the existing ways of submission in electronic or hard-copy format;

9. *Recognizes* the importance of the legal publications prepared by the Treaty Section, and stresses the need to update the *Summary of Practice of the Secretary-*

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1155, No. 18232.

² [A/75/136](#).

General as Depositary of Multilateral Treaties in the light of new developments and practices;

10. *Acknowledges* the efforts of the depositaries in the registration of treaties under Article 102 of the Charter, and encourages the continuation of such efforts in the future;

11. *Calls upon* the Secretary-General to ensure the expedited publication of the United Nations *Treaty Series*, in accordance with the regulations, through the prompt provision of editorial and translation services, to enable effective dissemination of and access to treaties;

12. *Decides* to defer consideration of proposals on the regulations to the seventy-sixth session, taking into account the limitations on meetings within the United Nations premises as precautionary measures aimed at containing the spread of COVID-19;

13. *Takes note* of the proposals made by Member States on the regulations, encourages Member States to submit to the Secretariat any additional proposals before 30 June 2021, and requests the Secretariat to transmit all the proposals it has received to Member States;

14. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-sixth session the item entitled “Strengthening and promoting the international treaty framework”.
