

## **Regional Capacity-Building Workshop on Treaty Law and Practice and the Domestic Implementation of Treaty Obligations**

Convened by the ECOWAS Commission and  
Hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Attorney General's Office, Ghana,  
in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme, the Treaty  
Section of the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs, the UNCITRAL Secretariat,  
the UN Office on Drugs and Crime and the Office of the UN High Commissioner  
for Human Rights

Accra, 9 – 12 June 2008

### **Summary Report**

1. A regional capacity-building workshop on treaty law and practice and the domestic implementation of treaty obligations was held in Accra, Ghana, from 9 through 12 June 2008.
2. Participants from the following States took part in the 4-day regional training: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. The individuals participating were from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Ministries of Justice (Attorney General's Offices) of their respective governments. There were thirty-six (36) participants and of these, sixteen (16) were women. The workshop was conducted in English and French, with simultaneous interpretation.
3. Taking into account the importance of increased participation in the treaty framework and the registration of treaties by States, attendees were trained by experts from the UN Office of Legal Affairs, Treaty Section, in the areas of 1) treaty law and the practice of the Secretary-General as Depositary; 2) technical legal assistance available from the UN; 3) how States sign and consent to be bound to treaties; 4) UN Secretariat practice on the registration of treaties pursuant to article 102 of the UN Charter; and 5) final clauses, reservations and declarations.
4. Following the general sessions on treaty law, presentations were given to provide the participants with a better understanding of selected substantive areas of international law, including trade law, transnational organized crime, terrorism, corruption and human rights. Expert trainers from the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the UNCITRAL Secretariat and UN Office on Drugs and Crime provided presentations in their respective substantive fields.
5. A guest speaker from the Freshwater Programme of the International Water Law and Policy group of the World Wide Fund for Nature (the WWF) gave a presentation on the New York Watercourses Agreement. A Justice of the Supreme Court of Ghana

also spoke on the implementation of international trade law treaties in Ghana and in the region.

6. On the final day of the workshop, a Joint Statement of Recommendations and Conclusions was adopted by the participants and includes planned actions and requests for assistance for the effective implementation of treaty obligations. The participants requested that these recommendations and conclusions be brought to the attention of the President of the ECOWAS Commission, who initiated this workshop through his invitations to the ECOWAS Member State governments.
7. The general sentiment among the participants in their evaluations was very positive. The workshop was found to be very useful and attendees were overall satisfied with the speakers, information and materials. Participants were appreciative of having the opportunity to network with regional participants and the UN experts. They expressed the desire to take the recommendations back to their governments and to receive support from the relevant UN offices to take action and to increase capacity in treaty-making and the implementation of treaty obligations.