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**OLA/UNITAR SEMINAR ON DEPOSIT OF TREATY ACTIONS
WITH THE SECRETARY-GENERAL AND REGISTRATION OF TREATIES**
Organized jointly with the Treaty Section of the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs
Tuesday 27, May 2003 and Wednesday, 28 May 2003
United Nations Headquarters, New York, Conference room 8

INFORMATION NOTE

BACKGROUND

Far-reaching changes have occurred in international law during the last decade. The United Nations has played a significant role in both the development and the codification of public international law and has provided an effective global forum for the negotiation of numerous multilateral treaties. A good appreciation of international law and the multilateral treaty framework is an integral part of the management of international relations today. In addition, treaties have an increasing significance in the lives and livelihood of individuals and communities and in the business activities of corporations which underlines the ever-expanding proximate relationship between treaties and domestic law. The *Millennium Declaration*, adopted by the General Assembly at the level of Heads of State and Government on 8 September 2000, identified certain key objectives for the Organization in the twenty-first century, including ensuring the proper implementation of treaty rights and obligations by States in areas such as arms control, disarmament, international humanitarian and human rights law. With the growth of the multilateral treaty framework, many developments have also occurred in the practice of the Secretary-General, as depositary of multilateral treaties, and in the registration function of the Secretariat.

Against this background, countries face new challenges in order to participate in multilateral treaties, particularly in the areas of signature, ratification, accession and domestic implementation of treaty rights and obligations.

The Secretary-General noted in his Millennium Report (A/54/2000) that many countries “lack the necessary expertise and resources, especially when national legislation is needed to give force to international instruments”. The United Nations Secretariat is committed to giving effect to the objectives advanced by the Secretary-General in the Report and those endorsed in the *Millennium Declaration* of the General Assembly, in particular, by providing training and assistance to facilitate more effective participation by countries in the multilateral treaty framework and in the registration of treaties with the Secretariat pursuant to Article 102 of the United Nations Charter. In addition, assistance will also be coordinated in the area of the domestic implementation of treaty rights and obligations.

OBJECTIVE

The primary objective of the two-day seminar is to provide an overview of the *deposit of treaty actions with the Secretary-General and the registration of treaties*. In view of the annual treaty event entitled, Focus 2003: Treaties Against Transnational Organized Crime and Terrorism, which will be held from 23 to 26 September 2003 during the General Debate of the 58th General Assembly at United Nations Headquarters, there will also be a particular emphasis on treaties

related to transnational crime and terrorism. The seminar is designed essentially to meet the needs of legal advisers and legal officers involved with the preparation of treaty actions to multilateral treaties and with the registration of treaties pursuant to Article 102 of the United Nations Charter. Assistance and guidance will also be provided on the domestic aspects of participation in multilateral treaties. This will be based on the *Treaty Handbook* that has been developed and published by the Treaty Section of the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs (<http://www.untreaty.un.org>).

The *Treaty Handbook* is a practical guide to the depositary practice of the Secretary-General and the registration requirements of the Secretariat. It is designed to serve as a tool for Member States, secretariats of international organizations and legal practitioners.

ORGANIZATION

The seminar will provide participants with practical hands-on experience on the basic aspects of international treaty law and practice as well as the technical aspects of undertaking treaty actions such as signatures, ratifications, accessions, etc. It will consist of core lectures, case studies and practical exercises to assist the participants in undertaking multilateral treaty actions more effectively.

PARTICIPANTS

The seminar is designed for members of permanent missions *and members of ministries from capitals*, and other legal personnel, in particular legal counsellors and legal advisers, dealing with matters of public international law or specifically treaty law. The selected candidates are requested to regard their participation as a firm commitment.

RESOURCE PERSONS

The seminar will be conducted by a team of lawyers from the Treaty Section, Office of Legal Affairs, of the United Nations.

WORKING LANGUAGE

The seminar will be conducted in English.

DATES AND VENUE

The seminar will be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York on Tuesday, 27 May 2003 and Wednesday, 28 May, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3p.m. to 6 p.m. in conference room 6.

REGISTRATION

Members of the Permanent Missions accredited to the United Nations in New York and government officials from capitals who wish to participate in this seminar are requested to complete the attached nomination form and return it to the following address:

UNITAR (Attn.: Ms. Nicole Valenta)
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Registration deadline: Wednesday, 14 May 2003