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## **UNCITRAL regional presence**

### **Note by the Secretariat**

#### **Activities of the UNCITRAL Regional Centre for Asia and the Pacific**

1. The General Assembly, in its resolutions 67/89 of 14 December 2012, 69/115 of 10 December 2014 and 70/115 of 14 December 2015, welcomed the activities of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law Regional Centre for Asia and the Pacific (“UNCITRAL-RCAP” or “Regional Centre”), in the Republic of Korea, towards reaching out and providing technical assistance with international trade law reforms to developing countries in the region.
2. The UNCITRAL-RCAP has carried out its activities in accordance with the priority lines of action identified in the UNCITRAL Secretariat’s strategic framework for technical assistance (A/66/17, para. 255), as well as with the specific mandate identified for the Regional Centre, namely (a) to enhance international trade and development in the Asia-Pacific region by promoting certainty in international commercial transactions through the dissemination of international trade norms and standards, in particular those elaborated by UNCITRAL; (b) to provide bilateral and multilateral technical assistance to States with respect to the adoption and uniform interpretation of UNCITRAL texts through workshops and seminars; (c) to engage in coordination activities with international and regional organizations active in trade law reform projects in the region; and (d) to function as a channel of communication between States in the region and UNCITRAL.



3. The Regional Centre has established the following four annual flagship events with the objective of streamlining activities to promote UNCITRAL texts and establishing regular opportunities for substantive regional contributions to support the present and possible future legislative work of UNCITRAL:

(a) The UNCITRAL Asia Pacific Spring Conference (second edition in 2015), a regional conference, held in the host city of Incheon, Republic of Korea, comprehensively covering UNCITRAL topics except those relating to arbitration and conciliation. In 2015, the conference focused on international sales law and electronic commerce, bringing together international, regional and national organizations, government officials and legal officers, academics, entrepreneurs and business people, experts and practitioners from more than thirty jurisdictions;

(b) The Asia Pacific ADR Conference (fourth edition in 2015), a regional conference, held in Seoul, promoting all UNCITRAL standards on arbitration and conciliation, and designed to attract not only experts and practitioners from around the world, but also officials, researchers and scholars from 56 Asia Pacific States to share their opinions and research findings related to the conference themes. In 2015, the conference gathered the institutional support of the International Chamber of Commerce, as well as the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Korea and the Korean Commercial Arbitration Board (KCAB). The conference addressed recent developments in the field of arbitration, such as ethics and corruption in international arbitration, appeal mechanisms in investment arbitration, regional implementation of the UNCITRAL Model Law on International Commercial Arbitration, the relevance of investor-State dispute settlement in the context of regional infrastructure projects, and the efficiency and effectiveness of alternative dispute resolution (ADR). The conference gathered experts, practitioners, representatives from arbitration centres and officials from the region (Australia, China, India, Japan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Qatar, the Republic of Korea and Singapore);

(c) The UNCITRAL Emergence Conference (first edition in 2015), held in Macau, China, with the support of the University of Macau, based on call for academic papers, addressing planned and possible future work of the Commission, and other emerging topics relating to the harmonization of international trade law. Entitled “Harmonizing Trade Law to Enable Private Sector Regional Development”, the 2015 conference attracted more than 50 participants from 14 jurisdictions, who discussed a wide range of topics including international contract law, electronic commerce, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), cross-border insolvency and international commercial dispute resolution;

(d) The UNCITRAL Asia Pacific Day, aimed at promoting awareness and encouraging the study, discussion, and implementation of the UNCITRAL texts, and celebrating the establishment of UNCITRAL by the General Assembly on 17 December 1966. Every year, universities from across the region are invited to join the celebrations by proposing a special programme that can range from special lectures and seminars, to public conferences. In 2015, seven universities joined the celebrations, namely: the Beijing Normal University which delivered a public lecture on “International Trade Law in E-Commerce Environment” (Beijing, 1 December 2015); the University of Western Australia which delivered a special lecture on uniform commercial law reform and a seminar for continuing professional development on arbitration, international sales and electronic

transactions (Perth, Australia, 10 December 2015); the China University of Political Science and Law which delivered a public lecture on “Comparison between CISG and UNIDROIT Principles and Their Impact on the Chinese Contract Law” (Beijing, 15 December 2015); Nagoya University which delivered a special lecture on online dispute resolution (Nagoya, Japan, 16 December 2015); Kobe University which delivered special lectures on UNCITRAL’s initiatives on the development of international dispute resolution and an arbitration moot based on UNCITRAL texts (Kobe, Japan, 18-20 December 2015); Chuo University which delivered a special lecture on “Trade Law Reform in Asia and the Role of UNCITRAL” (Tokyo, 18-21 December 2015); and Nankai University which delivered a lecture on “Trade Law Reforms and the Pilot Free Trade Zones in China” (Tianjin, China, 19 December 2015).

4. In addition to the above events, UNCITRAL-RCAP has, during the reporting period, also delivered and/or supported the following activities aimed at promoting certainty in international commercial transactions through the dissemination of international trade norms and standards, in particular those elaborated by UNCITRAL:

(a) On UNCITRAL’s mandate generally: Conference on “Doing Business across Asia: Legal Convergence in an Asian Century” organized by the Singapore Academy of Law, at which UNCITRAL-RCAP delivered a presentation on “legal convergence in Asia — learning from global harmonization initiatives” (Singapore, 19-22 January 2016); public lecture at the National University of Singapore on “Regional Development and Integration: the Role of UNCITRAL” (Singapore, 22 January 2016);

(b) In the area of the international sale of goods: Celebratory Conference on “35 Years of the CISG: Achievements and Perspectives” held with the Government of Singapore, the Singapore Management University and the National University of Singapore (Singapore, 23-24 April 2015);

(c) In the area of dispute resolution: Open Forum on Online Dispute Resolution held jointly with the Electronic Transactions Development Agency of Thailand (Bangkok, 4 April 2015); presentation on the implementation of UNCITRAL texts in Islamic law-influenced jurisdictions at Arbitration Week hosted, with the support of UNCITRAL-RCAP, by the Kuala Lumpur Regional Centre for Arbitration (Kuala Lumpur, 7-9 May 2015); lecture on UNCITRAL texts on dispute resolution at the International Arbitration Expert Programme held by KCAB (Seoul, 22 June 2015); Asia Pacific Transparency Observatory Inaugural Conference held with KCAB, the Asia Pacific Law Institute of the Seoul National University and the Seoul International Dispute Resolution Centre (Seoul, 18 December 2015); UNCITRAL Model Law Workshop delivered with the East Asian Branch of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (CI Arb) (Shanghai, China, 1 March 2016); presentation on the UNCITRAL Rules on Transparency in Treaty-based Investor-State Arbitration (2014) and the United Nations Convention on Transparency in Treaty-based Investor-State Arbitration (New York, 2014) at the Kuala Lumpur Regional Centre for Arbitration (KLRCA) International Investment Arbitration Conference, supported by UNCITRAL-RCAP (Kuala Lumpur, 10-11 March 2016).

Furthermore, in collaboration with the Asia Pacific Law Institute of the Seoul National University and KCAB, the Regional Centre has established the *ISDS Asia Pacific Transparency Observatory* as a framework for monitoring Asia Pacific treaty-based investor-State dispute settlements (“ISDS”). The Observatory will engage in disseminating the United Nations Convention on Transparency in Treaty-based Investor-State Arbitration (New York, 2014) and the UNCITRAL Rules on Transparency in Treaty-based Investor-State Arbitration (2014); collecting relevant information and research related to ISDS in the Asia-Pacific; monitoring ongoing negotiations and current trade agreements that concerns ISDS; assisting the Secretariat, through UNCITRAL-RCAP, in respect of issues regarding ISDS in the region; and disseminating relevant information related to the project among national and international partners;

(d) In the area of electronic commerce: Seminar on “Electronisation of Transferable Documents or Instruments Used in International Trade” organized with the Attorney-General’s Chambers of Singapore and the Association of Banks in Singapore (Singapore, 10-11 March 2016);

(e) In the area of procurement and infrastructure development: on the occasion of the International Anti-Corruption Day (9 December 2015), the Regional Centre issued a Call2Action for the promotion of the UNCITRAL Model Law on Public Procurement (2011), joining the global United Nations campaign #breakthechain, and considering that the Model Law was specifically designed to implement the procurement-related provisions in the United Nations Convention against Corruption (New York, 2003) (“UNCAC”). The campaign was launched in English, Korean, Chinese and Bahasa Indonesia on all RCAP’s social media platforms.

5. For the promotion of the rule of law and the uniform application and interpretation of UNCITRAL texts, UNCITRAL-RCAP hosted the first UNCITRAL Asia Pacific Judicial Summit, attended by 40 judges from 18 jurisdictions, and aimed at promoting the uniform interpretation and application of the Convention on the Recognition and enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards (New York, 1958) (“New York Convention”). Sponsorship for attendance by judges from Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States in the Asia Pacific Region was provided with the support of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China and the Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre. The Commission may note that the Judicial Summit is part of an initiative to establish partnerships with judiciaries and judicial training institutions across the region to facilitate the further integration of capacity-building activities, wider inclusion of UNCITRAL texts in training curricula and broader promotion of the uniform interpretation of UNCITRAL texts.

6. UNCITRAL-RCAP has also been engaged in the following capacity-building, technical cooperation and assistance activities aimed at promoting the regional use and adoption of UNCITRAL texts. These activities are priorities for UNCITRAL pursuant to a decision taken at its twentieth session (1987):<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-second Session, Supplement No. 17 (A/42/17)*, para. 335.

(a) On UNCITRAL's work generally: the UNCITRAL South Pacific Seminar was the first event UNCITRAL-RCAP held with the support of the Department of Justice of Papua New Guinea, the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Korea and the Centre for Small States (CSS) at the Queen Mary University of London, and specifically designed to provide capacity-building for the small island Pacific States in the fields of the international sale of goods, electronic commerce and arbitration (Port Moresby, 24-25 September 2015); the UNCITRAL DPRK Workshop (Beijing, 21-27 June 2015) was the first comprehensive training and capacity-building initiative for nineteen officials, legal officers and academics of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on international commercial and investment arbitration, international sale of goods, e-commerce, and secured transactions;

(b) In the area of international sale of goods, in particular the United Nations Convention on Contracts for the International Sale of Goods (New York, 1980) ("CISG"): the CISG Asia Pacific Roadshow 2015-2016 aimed at promoting regional accession, ratification and implementation of the Convention with technical briefings delivered to relevant domestic stakeholders (Bangkok, 3 April 2015; Manila, 3 September 2015; Vientiane, 2 February 2016; Bandar seri Begawan, 4 February 2016);

(c) In the area of dispute resolution: UNCITRAL Bhutan Workshop on arbitration, together with a side event for the judiciary of Bhutan on the enforcement of arbitral awards (Thimphu, 18-19 May 2015); Workshop for Incheon Businesses on Prevention and Resolution of Legal Disputes in Transactions, held with the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Korea and KCAB (Incheon, Republic of Korea, 4 June 2015); upon request by the Ministry of Justice of Viet Nam and in close coordination with the International Finance Corporation (IFC), UNCITRAL provided comments on the draft Conciliation Law of Viet Nam, taking into consideration the UNCITRAL Model Law on International Commercial Conciliation (2002);

(d) In the area of electronic commerce: UNCITRAL Thailand Workshop on the United Nations Convention on the Use of Electronic Communications in International Contracts (New York, 2005) ("e-CC") held with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and the Electronic Transactions Development Agency of Thailand (Bangkok, 3 April 2015); UNCITRAL Cambodia Workshop on "Legislative Framework for Safe and Sound Electronic Payments and Commerce" held with the National Bank of Cambodia (Phnom Penh, 27 April 2015); scoping mission, in collaboration with UNESCAP, to the Maldives on legislation on electronic commerce (Male, 28-29 October 2015); briefings on the e-CC with government officials of Japan (Tokyo, 21 December 2015), the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Vientiane, 2 February 2016) and Brunei Darussalam (Bandar seri Begawan, 4 February 2016).

7. Following technical assistance activities and in its capacity as a channel of communication between States in the region, UNCITRAL-RCAP has, during the reporting period, monitored the progress towards, and assisted States in, the adoption and implementation of the following UNCITRAL texts:

(a) In the area of international sale of goods:

United Nations Convention on Contracts for the International Sale of Goods, (Vienna, 1980): ratification by Viet Nam on 18 December 2015. Progress

towards the adoption of the Convention was reported by Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand;

(b) In the area of dispute resolution:

Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards, (New York, 1958): progress towards accession to the Convention has been reported by Palau and Papua New Guinea. Australia has also amended its International Arbitration Act 1974 (Cth) to simplify provisions on the enforcement of foreign arbitral awards in Australia and to improve compliance with the Convention in 2015;

United Nations Convention on Transparency in Treaty-based Investor-State Arbitration (New York, 2014): progress towards accession to the Convention has been reported by Australia;

UNCITRAL Model Law on International Commercial Arbitration (1985), with amendments as adopted in 2006: new legislation based on the Model Law has been adopted in Bahrain, Bhutan and Myanmar. In the United Arab Emirates, arbitration regulations have also been reported to be enacted by the Abu Dhabi Global Market with reference to the provisions of the Model Law. Progress towards adoption of the Model Law has also been reported by Mongolia and the Republic of Korea;

UNCITRAL Model Law on International Commercial Conciliation (2002): legislation based on the Model Law has been adopted in Bhutan; progress towards adoption of the Model Law has also been reported by Viet Nam; and

UNCITRAL Rules on Transparency in Treaty-based Investor-State Arbitration (2014) (the “Rules”): Two agreements specifically reference the Rules, with the details of arrangements for their application to be concluded in due course. On 17 June 2015 the Governments of China and Australia concluded a free trade agreement, and on 10 February 2016 the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China, under the authorization of the Central People’s Government of China, concluded with the Government of Canada an agreement on the promotion and protection of investments;

(c) In the area of electronic commerce:

United Nations Convention on the Use of Electronic Communications in International Contracts (New York, 2005): ratification by Sri Lanka on 7 July 2015. Progress towards ratification of or accession to the Convention was reported by Australia, the Philippines and Thailand.

8. Systematic coordination and cooperation activities that were pursued with institutions active in trade law reform during the reporting period include:

(a) United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP): UNCITRAL-RCAP has been involved in the preparation of the “Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-Border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific” formulated under the auspices of UNESCAP, including participation in the meetings of the Intergovernmental Steering Group on Cross-Border Paperless Trade Facilitation (Bangkok, 1-3 April 2015; 21-24 March 2016). UNCITRAL-RCAP participated in the 7th Asia-Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum which was held jointly by UNESCAP, the Asian Development Bank (ADB)

and the China International Electronic Commerce Centre (Wuhan, China, 20-21 October 2015). In addition, UNCITRAL-RCAP hosted a session on “Investment Agreements and Investor State Dispute Resolution: Current Trends and Emerging Issues” jointly with UNESCAP, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) at the 5th Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Foreign Direct Investment Network for Least Developed and Landlocked Developing Countries (Bangkok, 2 November 2015). A capacity-building workshop on “Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation” was also held with UNESCAP (Bangkok, 4 November 2015);

(b) United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD): as mentioned above, a session on “Investment Agreements and Investor State Dispute Resolution: Current Trends and Emerging Issues” was held jointly with UNESCAP, UNCTAD and ICSID (Bangkok, 2 November 2015);

(c) United Nations Project Office on Governance (UNPOG): UNCITRAL-RCAP participated in the 2015 UNPOG Roundtable on Promoting Good Governance (Seoul, 18 December 2015);

(d) World Bank: UNCITRAL-RCAP participated in the “Entrepreneurial Talents’ House of Opportunities and Supports” (ETHOS) programme organized by the World Bank and the State University of New York Korea by delivering presentations on UNCITRAL’s work (Incheon, Republic of Korea, 25 January 2016). In addition, as mentioned above, a session on “Investment Agreements and Investor State Dispute Resolution: Current Trends and Emerging Issues” was held jointly with UNESCAP, UNCTAD and ICSID (Bangkok, 2 November 2015);

(e) International Finance Corporation (IFC) East Asia and the Pacific Office: as mentioned above, coordination of technical assistance on laws on conciliation to the Government of Viet Nam;

(f) Asian Development Bank (ADB): as mentioned above, UNCITRAL-RCAP participated in the 7th Asia-Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum which was held jointly by UNESCAP, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the China International Electronic Commerce Centre (Wuhan, China, 20-21 October 2015); representatives of the ADB Pacific Private Sector Development Initiative, also attended and provided support to the 2015 UNCITRAL South Pacific Seminar (Port Moresby, 24-25 September 2015);

(g) Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC): The UNCITRAL-RCAP has continued its engagement with APEC in the context of the framework of cooperation with the APEC Economic Committee Friends of the Chair (“FotC”) Group on Strengthening Economic and Legal Infrastructure (“SELI”) to enhance the promotion of UNCITRAL texts in the fields of arbitration, international sale of goods, secured transactions and e-commerce. Specifically, the UNCITRAL-RCAP hosted the Workshop on effective enforcement of business contracts and efficient resolution of business disputes, with the Department of Justice of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China and the Asia Pacific Regional Office of the Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH), and participated in the first meeting of the FotC Group on SELI (Cebu, Philippines, 1 September 2015). UNCITRAL-RCAP also delivered a presentation on electronic commerce at the “APEC E-Commerce Forum 2015: New Paradigm for

Cross-Border E-Commerce and Online Shopping” (Jeju, Republic of Korea, 26 November 2015), and on arbitration and conciliation at the APEC International Seminar on the Ease of Doing Business (Seoul, 27 January 2016). Another APEC Workshop on Dispute Resolution was hosted in collaboration with the Department of Justice of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China (Lima, 26 February-1 March 2016). UNCITRAL-RCAP also recommended experts for the 2nd Expert Council of the APEC E-Commerce Business Alliance (APEC-ECBA), which were endorsed by the Plenary Meeting of the First Senior Officials’ Meeting (SOM1) Electronic Commerce Steering Group (ECSG) (Lima, 27 February 2016);

(h) Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO): UNCITRAL-RCAP participated in the 54th Annual Session of AALCO and delivered a speech on UNCITRAL and its texts on transparency in treaty-based investor-State arbitration (Beijing, 13-14 April 2015);

(i) Hague Conference Asia Pacific Regional Office (HAPRO): UNCITRAL-RCAP collaborated with HAPRO in supporting the Conference on “The Developing World of Arbitration: A Comparative Study of Arbitration Reform in the Asia Pacific” organized by the University of Hong Kong, China (Hong Kong, China, 27 October 2015);

(j) Office of the Chief Trade Adviser of the Forum Island Countries (FICs): as mentioned above, representatives of the Office of the Chief Trade Advisers of the FICs attended and provided support to the 2015 UNCITRAL South Pacific Seminar (Port Moresby, 24-25 September 2015);

(k) Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG): during the reporting period, UNCITRAL-RCAP engaged in cooperation with MSG to provide technical assistance to States in the South Pacific in the areas of international contracts and arbitration; MSG’s representative also attended and provided support to the 2015 UNCITRAL South Pacific Seminar (Port Moresby, 24-25 September 2015);

(l) International Chamber of Commerce (ICC): ICC supported UNCITRAL-RCAP’s annual flagship event — the Asia Pacific ADR Conference; UNCITRAL-RCAP delivered a presentation on UNCITRAL’s work on arbitration at the ICC’s arbitration workshop for government officials in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic (Vientiane, 29 February-1 March 2016);

(m) International organizations based in the Republic of Korea: participating in consultation meetings organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea (1 April 2015).

9. UNCITRAL-RCAP has continued its coordination efforts with the UNCITRAL National Coordination Committees for Australia (UNCCA) and India, and acknowledged the founding of the Global Private Law Forum (GPLF) of Japan as national expertise centre for international trade law. During the reporting period, the Regional Centre held the first UNCITRAL Australia Seminar with the UNCCA and the Attorney General’s Department of Australia (Canberra, 29 May 2015), followed by the “International Conference on Changing Dynamics of International Arbitration in India” where the UNCITRAL National Coordination Committee for India was launched (New Delhi, 31 October 2015). A briefing on the e-CC was also conducted with Japanese stakeholders in cooperation with GPLF (Tokyo,



21 December 2015). These private sector initiatives allow for wider dissemination of international trade norms and national coordination activities, allowing the Regional Centre to allocate more resources to dissemination of UNCITRAL texts in Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDCs) in the region.

10. Resolution 69/115 adopted by the General Assembly on 10 December 2014 reiterated its appeal to all bodies responsible for development assistance such as the bilateral aid programmes of States, to support UNCITRAL in its technical cooperation and assistance programmes and to cooperate and coordinate their activities with those of UNCITRAL in light of the relevance and importance of such work for the promotion of the rule of law, both at the national and international levels. In light of this, the Regional Centre participated in the Aid for Trade Seminar organized by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia for programme managers and policy officers in Asia from Australia and other donor countries (Singapore, 21-22 April 2016), and engaged in coordination with the Asian Development Bank (Papua New Guinea). Within this framework, the Regional Centre has engaged with agencies in charge of official development assistance to ensure further coordination of technical assistance activities in the field of trade law in the region.

11. To expand the reach of its mandate both with the hosting community and regional academia, the Regional Centre started national outreach and regional educational programmes during the reporting period, which aim to maintain regular dialogue with non-governmental organizations, local and national political stakeholders, other international organizations, academia, the media and the general public on various aspects of the UNCITRAL-RCAP, to enhance cooperation and community support, and increase awareness of UNCITRAL activities:

(a) For the national outreach programme, the Regional Centre has actively participated in the Incheon International Organizations Consultative Partnership and related events held by the Incheon Metropolitan City, and at the Incheon International City Forum (Incheon, 11 April 2016) organized by the Incheon International Relations Foundation. In addition, staff and interns have been involved in career fairs hosted by the Incheon Metropolitan City, as well as other international organizations and offices in the Republic of Korea. The Regional Centre has opened its doors to various visitors, including representatives of the Incheon Municipal Council, local students and interns from the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Korea. Various lectures have also been delivered to local students on UNCITRAL and its work. Also, the Regional Centre is preparing a website that includes a Korean language version to facilitate the promotion of UNCITRAL's work and the dissemination of UNCITRAL texts in Korea;

(b) The Regional Centre has continued its support to international trade law moot competitions held in the region, namely: the 2015 FDI Moot Asia-Pacific Regional Rounds organized by KCAB and the Centre for International Legal Studies (Seoul, 19-21 August 2015); the 13th Annual Willem C. Vis (East) International Commercial Arbitration Moot (Hong Kong, China, 6-13 March 2016); and the 9th Vis Japan Practice Moot hosted by Kobe University and the Academy for International Business Transactions AIBT (Kobe, Japan, 14 February 2016);

(c) The Regional Centre has launched an annual online publication by the Regional Centre of articles on topics of international trade law which are selected following annual calls for papers. The goal of that online publication is to stimulate interest, research and study on UNCITRAL and its texts. It is dedicated to the city of Incheon as host of the first UNCITRAL Regional Centre. In accordance with the mandate of the UNCITRAL-RCAP, all papers considered for the publication must be relevant to the Asia Pacific region. The views expressed therein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations;

(d) Academic engagement was fostered by jointly organizing events or by delivering public lectures at regional institutions and universities such as: Beijing Normal University, the China University of Political Science and Law, Chuo University, Dankook University, Hanyang University, Hokkaido University, the University of Hong Kong, Incheon National University, Kobe University, Korea University, Nagoya University, Nankai University, Seoul National University, the National University of Singapore, Soongsil University, the University of Western Australia and Yonsei University.

12. The Regional Centre has consolidated the function it serves on behalf of the UNCITRAL Secretariat as a channel of communication between States in the region and UNCITRAL, setting up contact points within governments in the region and engaging in regular consultations with government officials from Australia, Cambodia, China (including the Special Administrative Regions of Hong Kong and Macau), India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Mongolia, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam (A/69/17, para. 212).

13. The Regional Centre is staffed with one professional, two team assistants and two legal experts. During this reporting period, 19 interns were hosted at the Regional Centre. The core project budget allows for the occasional employment of experts and consultants. The Regional Centre relies on the generous financial contribution from the Incheon Metropolitan City to the Trust Fund for UNCITRAL Symposia to meet the cost of operation and programme, and on the contribution of a non-reimbursable loan of a legal expert by the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Korea. The Regional Centre has often been able to leverage the resources of its partners, especially for contribution to the costs of travel and of meeting facilities and services. In October 2015, following a related exchange of letters between the United Nations and China, the UNCITRAL Secretariat and the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China concluded a memorandum of understanding for the technical and administrative arrangements relating to contribution of a non-reimbursable loan of an expert to the UNCITRAL-RCAP.

14. According to article 13.3 of the Memorandum of Understanding signed on 18 November 2011, between the United Nations, and the Ministry of Justice and Incheon Metropolitan City of the Republic of Korea, regarding the operation and financial contribution to the Regional Centre for Asia and the Pacific, the terms of such support are to be reviewed by all parties five years after the establishment of the Regional Centre, i.e. before 10 January 2017. The latest payment of the annual financial contribution by the Incheon Metropolitan City to the Trust Fund for UNCITRAL Symposia was made on November 2015.

15. It is expected that interest in UNCITRAL texts will grow with additional requests for technical assistance. Such increase will call for a corresponding increase in available resources. Governments, the relevant bodies of the United Nations system, organizations, institutions and individuals are actively encouraged to make voluntary contributions to the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law Trust Fund for Symposia and, where appropriate, for the financing of special projects and otherwise to assist the UNCITRAL Secretariat in carrying out technical cooperation and assistance activities. Additional contributions to the project from member States, or from interested private and public entities recommended by member States, are required to further respond to regional expectations.

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