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INTERNATIONAL TRADE LAW
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Item 9 of the provisional agenda

BIBLIOGRAPHY ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE LAW

Report of the Secretary-General

1. At its third session the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law adopted the following decision regarding **bibliography** on international trade law:^{1/}

"The Commission:

1. Requests the Secretary-General:

(a) To ascertain the extent to which current publications give bibliographical information relating to subject matters included in the programme of work of the Commission;

(b) To ascertain whether such publications could be utilized in the preparation of further bibliographies;

(c) To invite the members of the Commission to inform the Secretary-General whether they, or research institutions in their country or region, could provide bibliographies of materials relating to subject matters included in the programme of work of the Commission;

(d) To examine the possibility of entrusting to a research institution the preparation, on a voluntary basis, of bibliographies

^{1/} Report of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law on the work of its third session, Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 17 (A/8017), para. 186.

on subjects within the programme of work of the Commission; all materials received under sub-paragraph (c) above would be transmitted to that institution;

(e) To inform the Commission of the financial implications that would be involved in the preparation of further bibliographies by the Secretariat or by the Secretariat in co-operation with a research institution.

2. Decides, to consider, at its fourth session, what action it should take regarding the continuation of work on the bibliographies in the light of further information to be obtained by the Secretary-General."

2. In accordance with paragraph (a) of the Commission's decision (quoted in paragraph 1, supra) an examination was undertaken of the extent to which existing publications give bibliographical information. A compilation was prepared of the leading bibliographical publications on legal matters and particularly in international trade law in most of the legal systems in the world;^{2/} this compilation, entitled "Survey of Bibliographies relating to International Trade Law", is being issued as an addendum to this report. It will be noted that a substantial number of bibliographies listed in the survey are kept up to date. In response to paragraph (b) of the decision, the survey contains indications on the utility of the existing bibliographies for the preparation of further bibliographies.

3. In conformity with paragraph (c) of the Commission's decision (quoted in paragraph 1, supra), requests were sent to members of the Commission inquiring whether they or research institutions in their country or regions might provide bibliographies of materials relating to the priority topics. Eleven responses to this inquiry have been received; eight responses indicated that certain institutions (universities, public agencies, or private organizations) would be willing to assist in the compilation of bibliographies on one or more of the

^{2/} The compilation was prepared by Professor Charles Szladits of the Parker School of Foreign and Comparative Law at Columbia University New York.

priority topics.^{3/} Analysis of the replies received thus far shows that the bibliographic materials that might be compiled from these sources would result in a bibliography which would be incomplete as regards topics and regions covered.

4. In response to the letter described in paragraph 3 above, one member drew attention to the need of having firm central direction and control of the work. This response also stressed the advantages of dealing separately with the bibliographic material available in relation to each subject, and expressed the opinion that the bibliographies might be more valuable if they were annotated to give a brief account of the scope and content of each publication.

5. Pursuant to paragraph (d) of the Commission's decision (quoted in paragraph 1, supra), inquiries were made regarding the preparation of bibliographies by a research institution on a voluntary basis. These inquiries did not lead to positive response.

6. Pursuant to paragraph (e) of the Commission's decision (quoted in paragraph 1, supra), an examination was made of the financial implications that would be involved in the preparation of further bibliographies by the Secretariat. It was determined that the preparation by the Secretariat of comprehensive, but not annotated, bibliographies of materials published in six or seven languages (including the four working languages of the General Assembly) relating to the four priority topics would require two qualified persons from one and one-half to two years to complete. The Office of Legal Affairs would therefore require two additional professional posts (P-2) and one general service post. The total costs for salaries involved, on the basis of a two-year period, would be \$91,628. This would not include subsequent costs of keeping the bibliographies up to date.

^{3/} Four members indicated that one or more of their governmental public agencies were prepared to assist in the work; one of these replies specified the institution which would undertake work in each of the topics. Two members indicated that several of their universities had agreed to undertake to assist in the work; no specific topics were mentioned. One member listed two national private institutions that were ready to assist in providing bibliographic information on the topics of international payments and international legislation on shipping. Another member submitted the name of a national private arbitration agency which had indicated its willingness to assist in the work.

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7. In the light of the facts set out above, the Commission may wish to rely on other sources of bibliographic material. As one alternative, the Commission may wish to invite those members and institutions to supply the material described in paragraph 3, supra, so that this material may be distributed as a Commission document. As a second alternative, the Commission may wish to consider whether the "Survey of Bibliographies Relating to International Trade Law" could be considered to sufficiently meet current needs. This compilation could be up-dated in the future to take into account new and expanded national and regional bibliographical compilations.
