
Deadline: Closed

Type: Seminar
Location: New York City, United States
Date: 8 Apr 2014 to 9 Apr 2014
Duration of event: 2 Days
Programme Area: Environmental Governance and Law, International Law, Multilateral Diplomacy
Specific Target Audience: Core Diplomatic Training
Website: http://unitar.org/ny
Price: $600.00
Event Focal Point Email: nyo@unitar.org
Event Focal Point Contact Number: 1-212-963-9196

BACKGROUND

Proper understanding and appreciation of international law and the multilateral treaty framework is integral to an effective management of international relations. The continuous growth of global challenges and concomitant expansion of collective responses have resulted in many developments in the practice of the Secretary-General (as the depositary of multilateral treaties) and in the registration function of the Secretariat under Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations. In the light of the ongoing process of the post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda, measures have been taken to ensure the wellbeing of all and improve living conditions for everyone worldwide to secure a more sustainable future. In regard to these recent developments, the special session of the Seminar on Treaty Law and Practice will focus on the Minamata Convention on Mercury, an international treaty designed to protect human health and the environment from anthropogenic emissions and releases of mercury and mercury compounds.

EVENT OBJECTIVES

This seminar aims to enhance understanding of delegates and other representatives of Member States on the principles of international law and the procedures relating to the UN treaty process. Through this seminar, the Secretariat hopes to inter alia: facilitate Member States’ more effective participation in multilateral treaties deposited with the Secretary-General; increase the registration of bilateral and multilateral treaties with the Secretariat as required by Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations; and, raise awareness in the area of the domestic implementation of treaty rights and obligations.
This seminar will also feature a special session on the recent Minamata Convention on Mercury. This treaty, which is one of the first treaties on highly toxic metals, will provide participants with a contemporary example of the importance of a treaty law and its impact in the world. It will illustrate how a treaty is created and demonstrate that beyond signing a treaty and its necessary ratification. Finally, this example will discuss the commitment necessary for ratification of this Convention.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

More specifically, by the end of this seminar, participants will be able to:

- Understand the basic concepts in treaty law and the evolution of the treaty law system;
- Distinguish between reservations and declarations and articulate the functions and limits of reservations;
- Explain the concept of "final causes" and their legal effects;
- Explain the mandate of Article 102 of the UN Charter and enumerate the registration procedures for Member States;
- Be able to locate and navigate treaty-related information online;
- Understand the requirements for the ratification of the Minamata Convention on Mercury.

**CONTENT AND STRUCTURE**

Conducted in English, this seminar takes place over two days and discusses the following topics: multilateral treaties deposited with the UN Secretary-General; final clauses of multilateral treaties; reservations, declarations and registration of treaties; and an overview of online resources. It will also feature a panel on the Minamata Convention on Mercury which was recently opened for signature, including: process, final clauses and implementation.

**METHODOLOGY**

The seminar is facilitated by UNITAR with a team of experts and lawyers from the Treaty Section of the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs. The seminar consists of core lectures, case studies and practical exercises to assist countries in undertaking multilateral treaty actions and registering treaties with the Secretariat more effectively. The special panel on the Minamata Convention on Mercury will feature UN experts and experts from Civil Society, to provide an overview of the issues at stake in this new body of law.

**TARGETED AUDIENCE**

The seminar is designed primarily for legal advisers and officers in the Permanent Missions to the United Nations in New York involved with the preparation of treaty actions to multilateral treaties and the registration of treaties. Representatives of governments, international organizations, the United Nations system or civil society with academic or professional interest on the topic are also encouraged to participate.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

For queries regarding the seminar, please contact the UNITAR New York Office, (212) 963 9196, nyo@unitar.org