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Item No. 13 on the agenda: Library and Research Activities

(prepared by the Secretariat)

<i>Summary</i>	<i>The document illustrates developments at the Library and its activities in 2017, perspectives for 2018 as well as proposals for the coming years</i>
<i>Action to be taken</i>	<i>The Governing Council is invited to take note of the progress made and to consider additional measures</i>
<i>Mandate</i>	<i>Work Programme 2017 - 2019</i>
<i>Priority level</i>	<i>High</i>
<i>Related document</i>	<i>Annual Report 2017 (C.D. (97) 2) - Study LXV/Scholarships: Impl. 28</i>

I. LIBRARY COOPERATION AND NETWORKING

1. The UNIDROIT Library continued in 2017 the cooperation strategy with other Roman and foreign libraries. In 2017, a very fruitful collaboration programme was established with the Library of the University of Regensburg.

II. CATALOGUING AND SOFTWARE UPGRADING OF THE LIBRARY MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

A. Library management software upgrading

2. The Library's software management system Aleph500 was upgraded to the latest version Aleph 21.3.4 without any interruption of services for the Institute's scientific staff or the researchers in the Library.

B. Cataloguing

3. With regard to cataloguing, work continued with regard to the development of a so called "Legal thesaurus", which allows an even more precise search result in all languages. The project is very innovative, just a few libraries in the world do have a legal thesaurus in various languages.

III. DIGITISATION

4. At its 96th session (Rome, May 2017), the Governing Council agreed to proceed with the digitisation of Library materials in-house so as to offer the Library readers an even broader range of research material. The project was considered an attractive opportunity to make the collection of a large library, such as the UNIDROIT Library, accessible in digital form.

5. In 2017 the UNIDROIT Library proceeded, therefore, on the implementation of an in-house digitisation project. About 500 monographs and articles were scanned in-house by the Library staff. The software module ADAM for the implementation of the digitised objects into the online catalogue, distributed by the firm Ex Libris, was acquired in November 2017. It has been integrated into the ALEPH 500 library management system. Thanks to the ADAM library management software module, it is now possible to easily connect a large quantity of electronic documents to the catalogue data. The professional book scanner "ALPHA PLANETARIO" was ordered in December 2017, and was delivered in February 2018. Thanks to the greatly improved technical resources, the full entry into the partial digitisation of the UNIDROIT library collection has been secured.

6. It is planned to introduce different levels of access to the digital resources. Users who contribute to the Unidroit Library by donations could be granted privileged user rights, as for example the full access to the digital collection. Ensuring such privileged rights could also be a good way to encourage donations in the future. At the moment, the quality of the previously digitised objects is checked by the library staff. Subsequent to quality control and the process of indexing, the digital objects can be incorporated into the digital collection and made available to users (with privileged user rights) for research as of July 2018. The Secretariat proposes to discuss the question of "scan on demand". The digitisation of, in particular, those materials proposed by the user group with privileged access rights can significantly accelerate the "intelligent" process of digitisation. The digitisation of less sought-after materials can be prevented and the best possible use can be made of the financial resources available for the project.

IV. ACQUISITIONS, DONATIONS, EXCHANGES

7. In 2017, the Library's holdings increased by 1118 titles, of which 642 were purchased outright, 147 were obtained on an exchange basis, while 329 further titles were received as gift. The expansion of the Library's holdings has been hampered by steady increases in the price of publications and a chronic lack of resources.

8. In 2017, as in previous years, the Library received donations in kind from the Max-Planck-Institute of Foreign Private and Private International Law in Hamburg.

V. RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

9. The UNIDROIT Library continues to attract researchers and readers from all over the world and, among the 1054 visitors in 2017, 63 foreign guests came from 39 different countries.

10. In 2017, 17 researchers were welcomed as interns (See Annual Report 2017, C.D. (97) 2), p. 27). Interns are generally expected to conduct research on specific aspects of the selected subject and prepare concept notes.

11. Ms Giuditta Giardini (Italy), LL.B., Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan, working on Cultural Property, and Mr Hamza Abdul Hameed (Pakistan), Advanced LL.M., Leiden University, Assistant to the UNIDROIT Foundation, were welcomed as Research Assistants in the UNIDROIT Secretariat.

12. UNIDROIT also welcomes public officials and lawyers from UNIDROIT member States to join its staff temporarily on *secondments*. Ms Paulien van der Grinten (Netherlands), Senior legislative Lawyer, Ministry of Security and Justice of the Netherlands joined the UNIDROIT Secretariat on secondment working on Civil procedure.

13. UNIDROIT's *Research Scholarships Programme* has grown, in its 22 years in existence, into an important tool for promoting UNIDROIT's work and related research in the field of international and comparative law. For a presentation of the Programme and its beneficiaries in 2017, see the UNIDROIT Research Scholarship Programme Implementation Report for 2017 (UNIDROIT 2017 – Study LXV/Scholarships: Impl. 28).

14. Voluntary contributions to finance scholarships were received from the UNIDROIT Foundation, the Transnational Law & Business University (TLBU), the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China (MOFCOM), as well as from members of the UNIDROIT Governing Council. The Secretariat expresses its gratitude to all donors in 2017 and hopes that they will wish to renew their financial commitment, and that new donors may join them, so the Programme's financial viability can be maintained and a satisfactory number of scholars selected.

VI. ACTION TO BE TAKEN

14. *The Governing Council is invited to take note of the progress made and to consider the additional measures proposed by the Secretariat.*