



**GOVERNING COUNCIL**  
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**Item No. 10 on the agenda: UNIDROIT Correspondents**

(prepared by the Secretariat)

<i>Summary</i>	<i>Implementation of the Plan – candidatures proposed by the Secretariat</i>
<i>Actions to be taken</i>	<i>Examination of candidatures by the Permanent Committee and recommendations to the Governing Council</i> <i>Approval of the selected candidates by the Governing Council</i>
<i>Related document</i>	<a href="#"><u>UNIDROIT 2023 – C.D. (102) 20</u></a>

**I. INTRODUCTION**

1. The institution of UNIDROIT *Correspondent* dates back to the 18<sup>th</sup> session of the Governing Council in 1947 following a suggestion by Professor Ernst Rabel. In order to obtain information on legal developments in the United States, which at the time had not yet become a Member State of the Institute, one Italian and two North American Correspondents were designated. The role took on an honorary quality in 1949, which led to the appointment of an increasing number of people according to a combination of different criteria which changed over time (for a complete history, see [UNIDROIT 2009 - C.D. \(88\) 12](#)) and, for a summary of actions after 2009, see [UNIDROIT 2019 - \(C.D. \(98\) 11\)](#)). In 2006, the Governing Council decided to establish a new category of “institutional correspondents”.

2. At its 101<sup>st</sup> session (May 2022), the Governing Council approved the Plan submitted by the Secretary-General to revise the system of Correspondents (see [UNIDROIT 2021 - C.D. \(100\) B.20](#)). The Secretariat then established the Office for Correspondents, a specific structure within the Institute to ensure a seamless, continuous dialogue with Correspondents, a Permanent Committee for Correspondents within the Governing Council, and a dedicated section for Correspondents on the Institute’s website.

3. UNIDROIT Correspondents are appointed for a period of three years (renewable under certain conditions) and act as (i) source of information on national law for the Secretariat, (ii) expert counsel on matters of transnational law, and (iii) informal ambassadors of UNIDROIT in their country of origin, helping to arrange missions of the Secretariat, organise events in their jurisdictions, and to establish a network of relations with local governments and institutions.

4. This document presents the steps undertaken to implement the Plan for action since the last session of the Governing Council in May 2023.

## II. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

### A. Office for Correspondents within the Secretariat and current Correspondents

#### 1. Office for Correspondents

5. A team of Liaison Officers is responsible for Correspondents from each of the four geographical regions of UNIDROIT (Africa, the Americas, the Asia-Pacific region, and Europe), with Principal Legal Officer and Treaty Depository Ms Marina Schneider coordinating the team. These Liaison Officers are tasked with channelling institutional communication and requesting technical information from Correspondents for different instruments and projects. They also act as intermediaries between Correspondents, the Library, and the staff in charge of the organisation of events.

6. Due to changes in the Secretariat in 2023, the following Legal Officers have been appointed:

- Africa and MENA: Ms Philine Wehling
- The Americas: Ms Priscila Pereira de Andrade (Latin America) and Ms Giulia Previti (North America)
- Asia and the Pacific: Mr William Brydie-Watson
- Europe: Ms Myrte Thijssen.

#### 2. Current Correspondents by region

7. In 2022, the Governing Council approved the list of Correspondents presented by the Permanent Committee for Correspondents for the period 2023-2025. In 2023, the Governing Council appointed a new Correspondent, bringing the total number to 109.

8. A summary table of Correspondents by region and by country is provided in [Annexe I](#).

##### **(a) Africa and MENA**

9. UNIDROIT has four Member States in Africa. The current list (triennium 2023-2025) contains two Correspondents from Sub-Saharan Africa (namely, from Burkina Faso and Kenya, both non-Member States) and one from South Africa, appointed in 2023.

10. UNIDROIT has four Member States in the MENA region. The current list (triennium 2023-2025) contains seven Correspondents from the MENA region (specifically, from Member States Egypt, Israel, Tunisia, and Türkiye, and from non-Member State Algeria).

##### **(b) The Americas**

11. UNIDROIT has 13 Member States in the Americas.

12. The current list (triennium 2023-2025) reports ten Correspondents from North America (three for Canada, five for the United States of America and two for Mexico). In April 2024, Professor Guy Lefebvre (Canada) indicated that he has retired from the University of Montreal and decided to withdraw from his academic and research activities. He therefore wishes to resign from his role as UNIDROIT Correspondent.

13. UNIDROIT has 31 correspondents from Central and South America – from Member States (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Paraguay, and Uruguay) and non-Member States (Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, and Peru).

**(c) The Asia-Pacific region**

14. UNIDROIT has 11 Member States in the Asia-Pacific region.

15. The current list (triennium 2023-2025) for Asia reports 13 Correspondents (from Member States China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, and Singapore, and from non-Member States Afghanistan and the Philippines).

16. In line with the decision to have a minimum of two Correspondents per Member State, the UNIDROIT Secretariat is interested in proposing two lawyers from Asian Member States for appointment as Correspondents and will submit these proposals to the Permanent Committee for Correspondents.

17. For the Pacific region, the current list (triennium 2023-2025) includes 11 Correspondents from Member State Australia and non-Member State New Zealand.

**(d) Europe**

18. UNIDROIT has 36 European Member States (with Israel and Türkiye listed among MENA countries for Correspondents). The current list contains 33 Correspondents from Europe (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine and United Kingdom), of which three are Institutional Correspondents - the Max Planck Institute for Comparative and International Private Law, the Hellenic Institute of International and Foreign Law, and the Swiss Institute of Comparative Law.

19. Professor Carla Sieburgh, correspondent for the Netherlands, was elected member of the UNIDROIT Governing Council for the period 2024-2028. On the basis of the decision taken by the Permanent Committee for Correspondents held in 2023 that, aside from *ad hoc* exceptions, Governing Council Members (and honorary members) would not become (or remain) Correspondents due to the similarity of the roles, Professor Sieburgh will no longer appear as Correspondent.

20. Similarly, Professor Herbert Kronke, former UNIDROIT Secretary-General, will no longer appear on the list of Correspondents.

**3. Activities of correspondents**

21. The Plan for Correspondents indicated specific functions expected from UNIDROIT Correspondents, such as (a) providing information upon request on matters related to the Institute's instruments and projects included in the Work Programme concerning the Correspondent's jurisdiction/region; (b) updating the UNIDROIT Secretariat on legal reform and legal developments in general pertaining to the Institute's instruments and Work Programme, as and when they occur; (c) assisting in raising awareness of the Institute and in the dissemination of its instruments in their jurisdiction; (d) as informal "ambassadors" of UNIDROIT in their jurisdiction, assisting the Secretariat in the preparation of missions to their country, including, but not limited to, the identification of additional local experts for meetings and events, and, in the case of Correspondents of non-Member States, in the relationship with the relevant government entity/agency.

22. A survey has been conducted asking Correspondents to provide the Secretariat with information concerning any activities that they conducted since the 102<sup>nd</sup> session of the Governing

Council (May 2023) in support of UNIDROIT (e.g., meetings organised or attended on UNIDROIT instruments or projects in their country, publications related to UNIDROIT instruments or projects, and promotion of UNIDROIT activities and projects). A confidential copy of the result of the consultation is available to Governing Council Members only (Annexe II).

## **B. Permanent Committee for Correspondents within the Governing Council**

23. Pursuant to the approval of the Plan by the Governing Council, a *Permanent Committee for Correspondents* was created within the Governing Council to supervise the functioning of the programme and to inform proposals for appointments and reappointments made by the Secretariat or by other Governing Council Members prior to putting the decision before the Governing Council. The Permanent Committee for Correspondents is an informal sub-committee composed of one member for each region and a Chair.<sup>1</sup> Members rotate every three years.

24. The Members of the Permanent Committee for Correspondents received the curricula vitae of the pre-selected candidates from Asia in advance of the 103<sup>rd</sup> session of the Governing Council for their comments and recommendation. The Permanent Committee for Correspondents provided a positive assessment of candidates Ms Meiling Huang (PRC) and Mr Paul Ng (Singapore) and proposed their appointment as Correspondents, subject to the approval of the Governing Council. The curricula vitae of the candidates are available for consultation (upon request to the Secretariat) in advance of the 103<sup>rd</sup> session of the Governing Council.

## **C. Website – separate section**

25. A separate section for Correspondents has been created on the Institute's website at the following link: <https://www.unidroit.org/correspondents/>. Each Correspondent was asked to send a short presentation text (maximum 300 words) describing his or her main areas of expertise related to the work of UNIDROIT. The section will also include events involving UNIDROIT instruments in which Correspondents have participated.

26. The separate section is already online but is currently being updated as the requested information is gradually received.

## **III. ACTION TO BE TAKEN**

27. *The Governing Council is invited to take note of the implementation of the Plan for Correspondents and to approve the proposal of the Permanent Committee for two new Correspondents.*

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<sup>1</sup> The current members of the Permanent Committee for Correspondents are: Mr Eesa Allie Fredericks (South Africa) for Africa, Mr Jorge Sánchez Cordero (Mexico) and Prof. José Antonio Moreno Rodríguez (Paraguay) for the Americas, Mr Kim In-Ho (Republic of Korea) for the Asia-Pacific region, and Prof. Attila Menyhárd (Hungary) for Europe.

## ANNEXE I

**DISTRIBUTION OF CORRESPONDENTS OF THE INSTITUTE BY REGION  
AND BY COUNTRY (as of April 2024)**

*Non-Member States\*\**

**RÉPARTITION DES CORRESPONDANTS DE L'INSTITUT PAR RÉGION ET PAR  
PAYS**

**(avril 2024)**

*États non membres \*\**

<b>MENA / MOAN</b>	<b>7</b>		
Algeria** / Algérie**	1	Tunisia / Tunisie	1
Egypt / Égypte	2	Türkiye	2
Israel / Israël	1		
<b>Africa / Afrique</b>	<b>3</b>		
Burkina Faso**	1	Kenya**	1
South Africa / Afrique du sud	1		

<b>Europe</b>	<b>31</b>		
Austria / Autriche	2	Poland / Pologne	1
Belgium / Belgique	1	Romania / Roumanie	1
Denmark / Danemark	1	Russian Fed. / Féd. de Russie	1
France	2	Slovakia / Slovaquie	1
Germany / Allemagne	4	Spain / Espagne	5
Greece / Grèce	2	Sweden / Suède	1
Italy / Italie	3	Switzerland / Suisse	1
Luxembourg	1	Ukraine**	1
Netherlands / Pays-Bas	1	United Kingdom / Royaume-Uni	2

<b>The Americas / Amériques</b>	<b>40</b>		
Argentina / Argentine	5	Guatemala**	1
Brazil / Brésil	7	Honduras**	1
Canada	2	Mexico / Mexique	2
Chile / Chili	4	Panama**	2
Colombia / Colombie	2	Paraguay	1
Costa Rica**	1	Peru** / Pérou**	2
Ecuador** / Équateur**	2	United States of America / États-Unis d'Amérique	5
El Salvador**	1	Uruguay	2

<b>Asia/ Asie</b>	<b>13</b>		
<i>Afghanistan **</i>	1	Pakistan	1
<i>China / Chine</i>	2	Philippines**	1
<i>India / Inde</i>	1	Rep. of Korea / <i>Rép. de Corée</i>	2
<i>Indonésie / Indonésie</i>	1	Singapore / <i>Singapour</i>	1
<i>Japan / Japon</i>	3		
<b>Pacific / Pacifique</b>	<b>11</b>		
<i>Australia / Australie</i>	8	New Zealand** / <i>Nouvelle Zélande**</i>	3

**Institutional Correspondents / *Correspondants institutionnels***

1	Max-Planck Institut für ausländisches und internationales Privatrecht – Hambourg	Germany / <i>Allemagne</i>
2	Hellenic Institute of International and Foreign Law <i>/ Institut hellénique de droit international et étranger</i>	Greece / <i>Grèce</i>
3	Institut suisse de droit comparé	Switzerland / <i>Suisse</i>