



**GOVERNING COUNCIL**  
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**Item No. 16 on the agenda: Situation of the Library**

(memorandum prepared by the UNIDROIT Secretariat)

<i>Summary</i>	<i>State of work in the Library (new software for the catalogue, collections, visitors, International Association of Law Librarians, training programmes)</i>
<i>Action to be taken</i>	<i>None</i>
<i>Related document</i>	<i>A.G. (58) 8, Appendix II</i>

**1. Electronic catalogue**

At its 83<sup>rd</sup> session, held in 2004, the Governing Council accepted the Secretariat's proposal to replace the current library software. This is a very important step toward the internationalisation of the UNIDROIT Library.

In accordance with the decision of the Governing Council, the current software, an ORACLE database, will be replaced in 2005 by a new E.D.V. system, the Aleph 500 – an integrated library system from the firm Ex Libris (for further information regarding the reasons for proposing a change of software, see Appendix II to Doc. A.G. (58) 8).

The new software guarantees a high level of security. After the transfer of the catalogue data, the UNIDROIT Library catalogue will be integrated into one of the most advanced library networks in Europe, that of the Max Planck Society in Germany.

The UNIDROIT Library catalogue will be hosted by the "Gesellschaft für Wissenschaftliche Datenverarbeitung, Göttingen" (G.W.D.G.), which is a corporate facility of the State of Lower Saxony and the Max Planck Society. It serves as a data processing and competence centre for the Max Planck Institute and as a data processing service centre for the University of Göttingen.

The forthcoming change of software and in the presentation of the catalogue on the Internet will require substantial preparatory work on the catalogue data. This data must be brought in line with international library standards. Therefore, in 2004, all 32,000 electronic catalogue entries have been checked once again and adapted to international standards. More than 15,000 authors' names and over 1000 collections have been unified in accordance with international

authority headings. Owing to financial constraints, the work was done by the Librarian and her assistant alone.

Furthermore, an authority database for authors' names, containing more than 35,000 entries, has been created, which in future will connect the names of authors in order to guarantee efficient and precise search results once the catalogue data has been transferred to the new Aleph 500 software. The work-intensive creation of such a database would have been impossible without the co-operation programme between UNIDROIT and the Documentation Section of the Paul Valéry University of Montpellier. It was thanks to this programme that, for four months, the Librarian was able to count on the assistance of three qualified students in the preparation of the authority files.

The preparation of a database regarding authorities for corporate bodies is still outstanding. This work will only start in 2005 with additional temporary library staff from the Paul Valéry University of Montpellier.

## **2. Library collections**

The Library's holdings in 2004 increased by 2,105 titles, 602 of which were purchased, 120 obtained on an exchange basis, for a total value of € 6,075, and 1,183 received by way of gift, for a total value of € 37,450. It should be noted that the Library's acquisition programme has been rendered extremely difficult as a result of the rise in the price of publications (a rise of about 20-30% for monographs and 10-20% for periodicals) in 2004.

A particularly generous gift, worth altogether € 30,500, was received from the Max Planck Institute for Foreign Private and Private International Law.

Another generous gift is expected soon, this time from the Library of the Department of Trade and Industry of the Government of the United Kingdom.

The Library is extremely grateful for these most welcome gifts. The Library also succeeded in obtaining new periodicals in exchange for the *Uniform Law Review / Revue de droit uniforme*.

## **3. Visitors**

The UNIDROIT Library continues to attract readers from all over the world. The 2,982 visitors in 2004 included 32 foreign guests from 14 different countries.

## **4. International Association of Law Librarians (I.A.L.L.)**

In 2004 the UNIDROIT Librarian, Ms B. Maxion, was elected a member of the Board of the International Association of Law Librarians (I.A.L.L.). For the next three years the UNIDROIT Library will therefore be represented in the most distinguished association of international law librarians.

## **5. Training programmes**

In addition to the co-operation programme between UNIDROIT and the Paul Valéry University of Montpellier, a training programme with the European Law Students Association (E.L.S.A.) started in 2004.

By applying under this programme, European law students are able to collaborate in the everyday life of the Library. They are also able to familiarise themselves with UNIDROIT's work. Furthermore, they are able to work on their own research projects, using the rich resources provided by the Library.

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