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Item No. 15 on the agenda: Library

(memorandum prepared by the Secretariat)

<i>Summary</i>	<i>The document illustrates developments made in the past year as to the management of the Library</i>
<i>Action to be taken</i>	<i>The Governing Council is invited to take note of the progress made</i>
<i>Mandate</i>	<i>Work Programme 2006-2008</i>
<i>Priority level</i>	<i>High</i>
<i>Status</i>	<i>Ongoing activity</i>
<i>Related documents</i>	<i>Annual Report 2008 (C.D. (88) 2)</i>

Electronic catalogue

1. In 2008, the UNIDROIT library's card catalogue has been completely transferred into electronic format and is now fully available on the internet. Some Eastern European and Asian country sections, catalogued in 2008, are currently being revised by the librarian and her staff (books in Chinese, Japanese, Russian and Polish, and other Eastern European languages). The authority database for corporate bodies is under construction. Names of corporate bodies must be concordant with international library standards. The authority database for French and English subjects, which has already been integrated in the library's electronic catalogue, must be corrected and synchronized.

2. In 2008, the forthcoming upgrade of the integrated library system, the Aleph 500 software, was prepared. Soon the Library's present Aleph 16.1 version will be upgraded to the new Aleph 500, 18.1 version. There are no additional costs involved in this operation. After three years of practical experience with the 16.1 version, upon request of the UNIDROIT library staff, some changes will be integrated into the standard 18.1 version of the Aleph 500 software. The software will be customized to satisfy the particular needs of the UNIDROIT Library relative to cataloguing and library administration. The objective target is to render the work flow even more efficient, rapid and transparent. Though the new version is very similar to the old one, the UNIDROIT library staff must be instructed to use the upgraded library system to full capacity.

Cleaning and space management

3. In 2008, an efficient project for the cleaning of the books, shelves, and the overall library space has been initiated. In the scope of preserving the collection of the library, books must be dusted on a regular basis and book storage areas must be kept as clean as possible. A person had to be hired temporarily for the purpose to clean the stacks and to move the library's holdings. This work was supervised personally by the librarian and her staff. The holdings were handled with extreme care to avoid damaging them, especially the sections affected by fungi (caused by the obsolete air conditioning system). Large parts of the library's collection were moved to create additional space for the new arrivals. Outdated library holdings were removed and some were donated to the University Library of Zenica, Bosnia. This library was very grateful to have received our books. A general revision and a check-up of the library's collection is currently underway. The aforementioned made it possible to regain a large additional space for storing the holdings. Furthermore, the premises of the former "Centro di Studio di Diritto Comparato" above the Library are now accessible for researchers during their stay at UNIDROIT.

Bibliography for the Uniform Law Review / Revue de droit uniforme

4. As usual, the bibliography for the Uniform Law Review was prepared in the library. More than 300 bibliographical references have been catalogued. In compliance with the principle of synergy among all UNIDROIT's electronic research tools, the bibliographical references are available in the bibliography of the printed version of the Uniform Law Review, as well as in the database of the electronic version of the same and in the online catalogue of the UNIDROIT Library. They are also the basis for bibliographical entries in the UNILAW database.

Donations and exchanges

5. The library is very grateful to have received generous donations in 2008, in particular for the contributions of the Uniform Law Foundation (Euro 10.000,00) and UK Foundation (ca. Euro 12.500,00). Thanks to these donations it has been possible to acquire essential English books, which otherwise could not have been purchased on account of the Library's restricted budget. Furthermore, the Library also received numerous books from the Max-Planck-Institute of Foreign Private and Private International Law, from the Library of the Department of Trade and Industry of Her Britannic Majesty's Government, and the Library of the Law Faculty in Luzern, Switzerland. All those contributions are very welcome and enriching for the UNIDROIT Library's collection.

6. The Library succeeded in obtaining new materials by exchange programs with the Uniform Law Review.

7. The UNIDROIT library continues to attract readers from all over the world.