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Item No. 12 on the agenda: Library and Research Activities

(Memorandum prepared by the Secretariat)

<i>Summary</i>	<i>The document illustrates developments at the Library and its activities in 2016, perspectives for 2017 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 2016 (C.D.(96) 2)</i>

I. LIBRARY COOPERATION AND NETWORKING

1. The UNIDROIT Library continued in 2016 the cooperation strategy with other Roman and foreign libraries. In 2016, a very fruitful collaboration programme was established with the Max Planck Institute Luxembourg for Procedural Law.

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 21.2.4 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 95th session (Rome, May 2016), 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 2016 the UNIDROIT Library proceeded, therefore, with the planning of the key issues involved in the conceptualisation and implementation of a in-house digitisation project. For the realisation of such a project, UNIDROIT started to examine the practical and financial possibilities, and continued consulting experts in the field of digitisation of books regarding the various technical ways for digitisation of materials in-house and on costs estimates (SIAI Servizi Integrati alle Imprese, Roma and Ex Libris, Hamburg). 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.

6. About 500 library materials (monographs and articles) were scanned in-house by library staff, and added to the online catalogue as digital objects in order to prepare a test version. Some changes were introduced in the Library's online catalogue to create access for users with privileged user rights. The test version will be presented on the occasion of the Governing Council 96th session in May 2017

IV. ACQUISITIONS, DONATIONS, EXCHANGES

7. In 2016, the Library's holdings increased by 1030 titles, of which 598 were purchased outright, 143 were obtained on an exchange basis, while 289 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 2016, 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 994 visitors in 2016, 42 foreign guests came from 26 different countries.

10. In 2016, 23 researchers were welcomed as interns (See Annual Report 2016, C.D. (96) 2), p. 27). Interns are generally expected to conduct research on specific aspects of the selected subject and prepare concept notes. Ms Glonaz Jafari (Iran), The Virje University of Brussels, Mr Ercole De Vito (Italy) Master of Laws, L.U.I.S.S. Guido Carli University in Rome, Ms Giuditta Giardini (Italy), L.L.B. Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan, Mr Hossein Fahimi L.L.M. (Iran), University of Tehran, Member of the Board of Directors and Vice President in Special Affairs, I.R. Iran Securities and Exchange Organization, were welcomed as Research Assistants in the UNIDROIT Secretariat.

11. UNIDROIT also welcomes public officials and lawyers from UNIDROIT member States to join its staff temporarily on *secondments*. Mr Solomon Madike Ngoladi (Nigeria), Senior Supervisor, Enforcement Division, Securities and Exchange Commission joined the UNIDROIT secretariat

12. UNIDROIT's *Research Scholarships Programme* has grown, in its 21 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 2016, see the UNIDROIT Research Scholarship Programme Implementation Report for 2016 (UNIDROIT 2016 – Study LXV/Scholarships: Impl. 27).

13. Voluntary contributions to finance scholarships were received from the UNIDROIT Foundation for International Uniform Law, members of the Governing Council on a personal basis, the President of UNIDROIT and the Transnational Law & Business University (TLBU). The Secretariat expresses its gratitude to all donors in 2016 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.*