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Item No. 13 on the agenda: Communications strategy and social media outreach

(prepared by the Secretariat)

<i>Summary</i>	<i>Description of the activities undertaken on the UNIDROIT website and social media channels</i>
<i>Action to be taken</i>	<i>The Governing Council is invited to take note of the activities and support the initiatives of the Secretariat</i>
<i>Related document</i>	<u>UNIDROIT 2021 – C.D. (100) B.23</u> ; <u>UNIDROIT 2021 – C.D. (100) B.19</u>

I. INTRODUCTION

1. As consistent with the goals announced during the 100th session of the UNIDROIT Governing Council, UNIDROIT's web presence is a key driver in spreading awareness of the Institute's activities and of the impact of its instruments.
2. The efforts put into the revamping and building of a simplified navigation system for the UNIDROIT website, now integrated with its social media strategy, have been instrumental in ensuring a steady increase in UNIDROIT's audience and users at a global level and across all demographics.

II. WEBSITE

3. UNIDROIT revamped its website and launched the current version during the 100th session of the Governing Council. Since then, the Secretariat has continued to improve the website to increase accessibility and facilitate the way through which documents and information can be easily found. A member of the General Services staff within the Secretariat has been provided extensive training and designated to aid and support the IT administrator in his tasks, to ensure continuity in his absence.
4. A majority of the legal officers and support staff are now trained and independent in the procedure of updating website content. Further training is required (and will be delivered by the end of 2023) to ensure that the internal publication procedures related to news, events and projects remain evenly distributed and do not put undue burden on the administrators of the website (see [C.D. \(100\) B.23](#)), who remain responsible for changes to the structure and support in the creation of new pages.

5. The website's new functionalities have allowed the Secretariat to work on its projects in more convenient and efficient ways. This has included using tools such as password-protected pages on the website, draft pages, and integration with online events, as well as better video and media integration.

6. Several new sections were added to the website in 2022, including items related to the UNIDROIT Academy, Correspondents, and the UNIDROIT International Program for Law and Development. New features, pictures and multimedia content are also continually being added to provide better introductions to members of the staff and to the Institute's projects.

III. SOCIAL MEDIA

7. UNIDROIT launched its social media programme during the Institute's 90th anniversary celebrations in April 2016. The purpose of UNIDROIT's social media presence continues to be to:

- raise UNIDROIT's public profile and online awareness of its current projects;
- promote upcoming events and encourage participation from relevant stakeholders;
- allow researchers, visiting professionals, interns, and other stakeholders to connect with each other and maintain a connection with UNIDROIT;
- serve as a dynamic channel to communicate with the global community interested in UNIDROIT's work; and
- allow UNIDROIT to widely advertise vacancies and opportunities for internships and scholarships.

8. UNIDROIT currently maintains accounts on [LinkedIn](#) (since 2016), Facebook (since 2016), [Twitter](#) (since 2018), and [YouTube](#) (relaunched in 2019). UNIDROIT's presence on YouTube was relaunched to promote videos of expert presentations made at the Institute by international legal experts and visiting scholars and to share promotional videos about UNIDROIT instruments and events.

9. In general, pursuant to a regularly-updated internal social media strategy, the Secretariat focuses on sharing the following types of content through its various social media channels:

- updates relating to projects;
- notable anniversaries of signatures, ratifications, accessions and entries into force of UNIDROIT instruments in States, under the #UNIDROITanniversaries hashtag;
- UNIDROIT events (past and upcoming);
- external events relevant to UNIDROIT's work (e.g. international moot court competitions utilising UNIDROIT instruments);
- UNIDROIT attendance at other international meetings;
- profiles of scholars and interns;
- internship and scholarship opportunities;
- library news;
- webinars;
- history of the Institute;
- announcements of partnerships with other organisations;
- sharing relevant content from the social media accounts of partner organisations; and
- monthly themes to promote certain projects.

10. Additionally, in order to enhance its digital presence and outreach, the Secretariat collaborates with universities, affiliated international organisations, and individuals who share an interest in UNIDROIT's work. All posts are accompanied by relevant images or videos that are either captured at UNIDROIT or are royalty-free. Furthermore, every post contains a link back to the UNIDROIT website to direct traffic and increase the website's visitors.

11. Over the years, the Secretariat has benefitted from attending the "Social Media Roundtable" organised every six months by the United States Mission to the UN Agencies in Rome. These meetings bring together social media managers from international organisations based in Rome (FAO, IFAD, WFP, IDLO, UNIDROIT, ICCROM, etc.) to discuss best practices in social media management and effective strategies, and to improve social media coordination. This forum has allowed the Institute to benefit from the professional social media expertise of larger organisations to improve its own social media practices.

IV. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

12. The three key performance indicators for the Institute's Communication Strategy are: (i) number of followers; (ii) the "reach" of the social media programme (the total number of people that see UNIDROIT social media content); and (iii) the number of referrals to the UNIDROIT website. Since its launch, the UNIDROIT social media programme has exceeded expectations on all three key performance indicators. As of 13 April 2023, the Institute had more than 26,000 followers on LinkedIn, 5,500 followers on Facebook, 2,000 followers on Twitter, and 450 subscribers on YouTube. As for the Institute's "reach" across social media, over the past twelve months UNIDROIT content was displayed on news feeds more than 706,364 times on LinkedIn, around 76,956 times on Twitter, and 26,464 times on Facebook. Additionally, videos on the UNIDROIT YouTube channel were viewed more than 7,800 times in the past 12 months, with a total watch time of close to 500 hours.

13. UNIDROIT's social media channels have a global reach and cut across social demographics. Social media have consistently served as the largest source of referrals for the website (except search engines). Of these referrals, the majority (more than 50%) come through LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter. These statistics reaffirm the importance of LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter towards the promotion of UNIDROIT activities.

14. None of UNIDROIT's social media accounts requires subscription fees. UNIDROIT utilises a software called SocialChamp to simultaneously post content to its different platforms, which significantly lowers the amount of time required to maintain UNIDROIT's social media accounts. Through SocialChamp, posts can be scheduled in advance, which allows UNIDROIT to promote content at strategic times to ensure maximum engagement.

15. In 2021, UNIDROIT launched a Social Media Internship Programme, which has welcomed four interns to assist the Secretariat in producing content for the Institute's social media channels, with a particular focus on videos. This programme has been continued into 2023 and UNIDROIT now maintains an Explanatory Videos Playlist on its YouTube channel, which includes concise videos explaining UNIDROIT instruments and projects. The UNIDROIT YouTube channel, as of April 2023, counted more than 450 subscribers, with explanatory videos on instruments such as the Cape Town Convention accumulating more than 2000 views.

V. ACTION TO BE TAKEN

16. *The Governing Council is invited to take note of the activities of the Secretariat and to support its initiatives in this field. The Council is further invited to alert the Secretariat to possible improvements to the organisation's website, as evidenced in their utilisation of the website.*