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Item No. 13 (e) on the agenda: UNIDROIT Correspondents

(prepared by the Secretariat)

<i>Summary</i>	<i>Implementation of the Plan – renewal of correspondents - candidatures proposed</i>
<i>Actions to be taken</i>	<i>Examination of candidatures by the Permanent Committee for Correspondents and recommendations to the Governing Council</i> <i>Approval of the selected candidates by the Governing Council</i>
<i>Related document</i>	<u>UNIDROIT 2024 – C.D. (103) 20</u>

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The institution of UNIDROIT *Correspondent* dates back to the 18th 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 101st session (May 2022), the Governing Council approved the Plan submitted by the Secretary-General (also on the basis of the results of a Sub-Committee of the Governing Council which met in 2013)¹ 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.

¹ See document [UNIDROIT 2013 – C.D. \(92\) 10](#)

4. This document presents the steps undertaken to implement the Plan for action since the last session of the Governing Council in May 2024. This year the Permanent Committee for Correspondents will examine the renewal of the correspondents appointed in 2022 and the proposals of new correspondents and will make a recommendation to the Governing Council for a final decision.

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 Depositary 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. The following Legal Officers have been appointed for the different regions:

- 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 June 2023 to May 2025. According to the rules, the renewal of the mandate of those 107 Correspondents will be examined by the Permanent Committee for Correspondents.

8. In 2023, the Governing Council appointed a new Correspondent (Africa) (June 2023 to May 2026), and in 2024 it appointed two new Correspondents (China and Singapore) (June 2024 to May 2027), bringing the total number to 110.

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

(a) Africa and MENA

10. 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.

11. 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).

12. In line with the decision to enlarge the network of Correspondents within non-member States, the Secretariat will propose to the Permanent Committee of Correspondents to consider the appointment of two candidates from the region.

(b) The Americas

13. UNIDROIT has 13 Member States in the Americas.
14. The current list (triennium 2023-2025) reports nine Correspondents from North America (two for Canada, five for the United States of America and two for Mexico).
15. 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). The Secretariat presents a proposal to the Permanent Committee for a new Correspondent from Peru.

(c) The Asia-Pacific region

16. UNIDROIT has 11 Member States in the Asia-Pacific region.
17. The current list for Asia reports 15 Correspondents (from Member States China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, and Singapore, and from non-Member States Afghanistan and the Philippines).
18. 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

19. UNIDROIT has 36 European Member States (with Israel and Türkiye listed among MENA countries for Correspondents). The current list contains 31 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.
20. As Professor Carla Sieburgh was elected member of the UNIDROIT Governing Council for the period 2024-2028, she is no longer correspondent for the Netherlands and the Secretariat is intending to propose to the Permanent Committee to appoint another candidate from the Netherlands. In line with the decision to have a minimum of two Correspondents per Member State, the UNIDROIT Secretariat is interested in proposing a candidate from the Russian Federation for appointment as Correspondent.

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 103rd session of the Governing Council (May 2024) 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). This year it is particularly important as correspondents will go through the process for renewal for another 3 years (see below).

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.²

24. Members of the Permanent Committee rotate every three years and therefore a new set of members will need to be appointed for the period 2025 to 2028.

25. At the 105th session of the Governing Council, correspondents appointed in 2022 will go through the process for renewal. Correspondents were asked whether they agreed to remain one and to indicate their activities during the last year (as they did for 2023).

26. The Members of the Permanent Committee are scheduled to meet on during the forthcoming meeting of the Governing Council to discuss the reappointment of the current Correspondents whose three-year mandate comes to an end as well as to decide whether to recommend the appointment of new candidates to the plenary of the Governing Council.

C. Website – separate section

27. 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 their main areas of expertise related to the work of UNIDROIT. The section will also include events involving UNIDROIT instruments in which Correspondents have participated. The section is constantly being updated as the requested information is gradually received.

III. ACTION TO BE TAKEN

28. *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 reappointment of the current Correspondents and for the appointment of new Correspondents.*

² 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 May 2025)**

*Non-Member States***

**RÉPARTITION DES CORRESPONDANTS DE L'INSTITUT PAR RÉGION ET PAR
PAYS (mai 2025)**

*États non membres ***

Africa and MENA / Afrique et MOAN	10		
Algeria** / Algérie**	1	Israel / Israël	1
Burkina Faso**	1	South Africa / Afrique du sud	1
Egypt / Égypte	2	Tunisia / Tunisie	1
Kenya**	1	Türkiye	2

Europe	31		
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

The Americas / Amériques	40		
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

Asia/ Asie	15		
Afghanistan **	1	Pakistan	1
China / Chine	3	Philippines**	1
India / Inde	1	Rep. of Korea / Rép. de Corée	2

Indonésie / <i>Indonésie</i>	1	Singapore / <i>Singapour</i>	2
Japan / <i>Japon</i>	3		
Pacific / <i>Pacifique</i>	11		
Australia / <i>Australie</i>	8	New Zealand** / <i>Nouvelle Zélande**</i>	3

Institutional Correspondents / *Correspondants institutionnels*

1	Max-Planck Institut für ausländisches und internationales Privatrecht – Hamburg	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	Swiss Institute of Comparative Law / <i>Institut suisse de droit comparé</i>	Switzerland / <i>Suisse</i>