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Institut International pour l'Unification du Droit Privé

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Item No. 13 on the agenda: UNIDROIT Workstream White Papers

(Prepared by the UNIDROIT Secretariat)

Summary	*Overview on the work of the seven Centenary Workstreams (2025–2026)*
Action to be taken	*The UNIDROIT Secretariat invites the General Assembly to take note of the significant scientific activities underpinning the celebration of the Centenary of UNIDROIT. Each White Paper and relevant recommendations will be presented by the Chair or representative of the relevant Committee and discussed during the 86th session of the General Assembly. Member States are invited to take part in the discussion and to acknowledge the work of the Centenary Workstreams.*
Related documents	*UNIDROIT 2024 – C.D. (103) 29; UNIDROIT 2024 – A.G. (84) 11; UNIDROIT 2024 – A.G. (84) 12; UNIDROIT 2025 – C.D. (105) 31; UNIDROIT 2025 – A.G. (85) 13; UNIDROIT 2026 – A.G. (86) 10 (a) – (g)*

I. Introduction

1. As part of the plans for the Centenary of UNIDROIT presented to the Governing Council at its 103rd session (Rome, 8-10 May 2024) (UNIDROIT 2024 – C.D. (103) 29), the work of UNIDROIT was divided into seven thematic Workstreams, covering the Institute's main areas of activity (see Section II below). The plans were shared with the General Assembly at its 84th session (Rome, 12 December 2024) (UNIDROIT 2024 – A.G. (84) 11; A.G. (84) 12), and updates on the progress of the Workstreams were subsequently provided to the Governing Council at its 105th session (Rome, 20-23 May 2025) (UNIDROIT 2025 – C.D. (105) 31), and to the General Assembly at its 85th session (Rome, 11 December 2025) (UNIDROIT 2025 – A.G. (85) 13). Each Workstream was tasked with a threefold objective: (i) to take stock of how UNIDROIT's relevant instruments have performed in the past; (ii) to analyse their strengths and weaknesses; and (iii) to propose a way forward in each thematic area, with specific recommendations. As the Centenary draws to a close, this document presents the results of the work undertaken by the seven Workstreams.

II. Overview of the Centenary Workstreams

1. Access to Credit

2. The Access to Credit Workstream (AC WS) is coordinated by Senior Legal Officer William Brydie-Watson, with the support of Legal Consultant Jianfa Wang, from the Secretariat and is chaired by Neil Cohen (1901 Distinguished Research Professor of Law, Brooklyn Law School). The Committee members are Ole Böger (Judge, German Federal Court of Justice, Germany), Rafael Castillo-Triana (Chief Executive Officer, The Alta Group – Latin American Region), Louise Gullifer (Rouse Ball Professor of English Law, University of Cambridge), Alejandro Garro (Professor, Columbia Law School, and Honorary Professor, University of Buenos Aires), Megumi Hara (Professor, Chuo University), Dora Neo (Professor, National University of Singapore), Iyare Otabor-Olubor (Associate Professor, Aston University), and Teresa Rodríguez de las Heras Ballell (Professor, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, and President of the European Law Institute).

3. The AC WS Committee held six online meetings during 2025 and 2026, complemented by discussions within subgroups during the intersessional periods. Throughout this process, Committee members actively contributed to the research, discussions and drafting of the White Paper. A hybrid workshop was held at the University of Cambridge on 25 September 2026, bringing together Committee members and inviting contributions from representatives of international organisations and other institutional partners.[1]

4. The White Paper resulting from the Committee's work provides an assessment of the relevant UNIDROIT instruments and identifies possible directions for future work in the field of access to credit. The Committee's recommendations regarding each sub-area of access to credit (asset-based finance, factoring, leasing, agricultural finance and crowdfunding) are set out in the various sections of the White Paper, while the concluding observations are set out in **Section VIII, entitled "Final Recommendations and Concluding Remarks"**, of the Access to Credit White Paper, issued as related document A.G. (86) 10) (a).

2. Contract Law

5. The Contract Law Workstream (CL WS) is coordinated by Deputy Secretary-General Anna Veneziano, Senior Legal Officer Myrte Thijssen and Legal Officer Philine Wehling, with the support of Legal Consultant Jianfa Wang, from the Secretariat. The Committee is chaired by Arthur Hartkamp (former Doyen and Member *ad honorem* of the UNIDROIT Governing Council). The Committee members are Yeşim Atamer (Professor, University of Zurich), Neil Cohen (1901 Distinguished Research Professor of Law, Brooklyn Law School), Giuditta Cordero-Moss (Professor, University of Oslo, and President of IACL), Lauro Gama Jr (Professor, Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (PUC-Rio), and Partner, Lauro Gama Advogados Associados), Andrés Jana (Jana & Gil, Dispute Resolution), María Pilar Perales Viscasillas (Professor, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid), Hiroo Sono (Professor, Hokkaido University), and Christian Twigg-Flesner (Professor, University of Warwick).

6. The CL WS Committee held nine online meetings between 2025 and 2026, complemented by discussions and exchanges among members during the intersessional periods. Committee members contributed draft texts on their respective topics, which were subsequently discussed and refined through the Committee's meetings. A hybrid workshop was held at UNIDROIT Headquarters in Rome on 29 June 2026, bringing together Committee members, invited experts from academia and legal practice, and participants in the UNIDROIT International Programme for Law and Development (IPLD) Africa Plus.[2]

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[1] See https://www.unidroit.org/unidroit-holds-centenary-access-to-credit-workshop/.

[2] See https://www.unidroit.org/unidroit-holds-the-centenary-contract-law-workstreams-committee-workshop/.

7. The White Paper resulting from the Committee's work provides an assessment of UNIDROIT's existing instruments in the field of contract law and identifies possible directions for future work. The Committee's recommendations are set out in **Part Four, entitled "The Way Forward"**, of the Contract Law White Paper, issued as related document A.G. (86) 10 (b).

3. Cultural Property

8. The Cultural Property Workstream (CP WS) is coordinated by Principal Legal Officer Marina Schneider, with the support of Legal Consultant Hui Fang, from the Secretariat. The Committee is chaired by Manlio Frigo (Honorary Professor, University of Milan, and Of Counsel, BonelliErede). The Committee members are H.E. Angelo Dan (Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Benin to France), Mr José Angelo Estrella-Faria, Secretary General of the Comité Maritime International and former Secretary General of UNIDROIT, Giuditta Giardini (PhD, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore), Keun-Gwan Lee (Professor, School of Law, Seoul National University, and Member of the UN International Law Commission), Vincent Négri (Researcher, Institut des Sciences sociales du Politique, ENS Paris-Saclay), Marc-André Renold (Honorary Professor, University of Geneva, and UNESCO Chair on International Law for the Protection of Cultural Property), and Ana Filipa Vrdoljak (Professor, Faculty of Law, University of Technology Sydney, UNESCO Chair in International Law and Cultural Heritage, and Co-coordinator, UNESCO-UNITWIN Network on Culture in Emergencies).

9. The CP WS Committee held seven online meetings during 2025 and 2026, complemented by discussions and exchanges among members during the intersessional periods. Committee members contributed draft texts on their respective topics, which were subsequently discussed and refined through the Committee's meetings. A hybrid workshop was held in Rome on 29 September 2026, bringing together Committee members and invited participants.[3]

10. The White Paper resulting from the Committee's work provides an assessment of UNIDROIT's instruments and projects in the field of cultural property. These are the 1995 UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects, the UNESCO–UNIDROIT Model Provisions on State Ownership of Undiscovered Cultural Objects (2011), and the ongoing project on Orphan Cultural Objects (Private Art Collections). The assessment considers both their implementation and their wider engagement. The White Paper also identifies possible avenues for future work. The Committee's recommendations are set out in **Part V, entitled "Recommendations"**, of the CP White Paper, circulated separately to the General Assembly as document A.G. (86) 10 (c).

4. Financial Markets and Technology

11. The Financial Markets and Technology Workstream (FMT WS) is coordinated by Senior Legal Officer Myrte Thijssen, Legal Officer Giulia Stella Previti, and Legal Consultant Theodora Kostoula, with the support of Legal Consultant Jianfa Wang, from the Secretariat, and is chaired by Janis Sarra (Professor Emerita, University of British Columbia, Canada). The Committee members are Elsie Addo Awadzi (former Second Deputy Governor, Bank of Ghana), Risham Garg (Professor, National Law University, India), Francisco Garcimartín (Professor, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid), Louise Gullifer (Rouse Ball Professor of English Law, University of Cambridge, and Fellow of Gonville and Caius College), Matthias Haentjens (Professor, Leiden University), Matthias Lehmann (Professor, University of Vienna), Charles W. Mooney Jr (Professor Emeritus, University of Pennsylvania), and Andrea Tosato (Professor, SMU Dedman School of Law).

12. The FMT WS Committee held seven online meetings during 2025 and 2026, complemented by discussions and exchanges among members during the intersessional periods. Committee members contributed to the research and drafting of the White Paper, drawing on their expertise across the areas covered by the Workstream. A hybrid workshop was held at UNIDROIT Headquarters

[3] See https://www.unidroit.org/unidroit-centenary-cultural-property-workshop/.

in Rome on 11 September 2026 to gain feedback on the draft White Paper, bringing together Committee members, several members of the Governing Council, as well as invited experts from relevant international, regional and national bodies and organisations, academia and legal practice, and participants in the IPLD BEPCAC Programme.[4]

13. The White Paper resulting from the Committee's work provides an assessment of UNIDROIT's existing instruments and activities in the field of financial markets and technology and identifies possible directions for future work. The Committee's findings and recommendations are set out in **Part Four, entitled "Summary of Committee Findings"**, of the Financial Markets and Technology White Paper, issued as related document A.G. (86) 10 (d).

5. Procedural Law and Dispute Resolution

14. The Procedural Law and Dispute Resolution Workstream (PLDR WS) is coordinated by Deputy Secretary-General Anna Veneziano and Legal Consultants Theodora Kostoula and Kateryna Bovsunovska, with the support of Legal Consultant Hui Fang, from the Secretariat. The Committee is chaired by the Hon. Diane Wood (Director of the American Law Institute and Professor, University of Chicago Law School). The Committee members are María Cecilia Fresnedo Herrera (Professor, University of the Republic, School of Law, Montevideo), Alexis Mourre (Founding Partner, Mourre, Chessa, Le Lay Arbitration), Teresa Rodríguez de las Heras Ballell (Professor, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, and President of the European Law Institute), Eduardo Silva Romero (Chair, ICC Institute of World Business Law), John Sorabji (Professor, University College London), Etsuko Sugiyama (Professor, Graduate School of Law, Hitotsubashi University), and Rolf Stürner (Professor Emeritus, University of Freiburg, and former Co-Reporter of the ALI/UNIDROIT Principles of Transnational Civil Procedure).

15. The PLDR WS Committee held nine online meetings during 2025 and 2026, complemented by discussions and exchanges among members during the intersessional periods. Committee members contributed draft texts on their respective topics. These were consolidated into a single draft, which was then discussed and refined through the Committee's meetings. A first version of the White Paper was discussed at the UNIDROIT Centenary Regional Conference for Europe, co-organised with the European Law Institute (ELI) in Paris on 1 September 2026, and the Committee took into account the feedback received there. The White Paper also benefited from the discussions at the UNIDROIT Centenary Arbitration Conference held in Rome on 22 and 23 October 2026.[5]

16. The White Paper resulting from the Committee's work provides an assessment of UNIDROIT's existing instruments in the field of procedural law and dispute resolution and identifies possible directions for future work. The Committee's recommendations are set out in **the final section of each chapter** of the White Paper, issued as related document A.G. (86) 10 (e).

6. Private Law and Agriculture

17. The Private Law and Agriculture Workstream (PLA WS) is coordinated by Legal Officers Philine Wehling and Priscila Pereira de Andrade, with the support of Legal Consultant Hui Fang, from the Secretariat. The Committee is chaired by Henry Gabriel (Professor, Elon University, and Member *ad honorem* of the UNIDROIT Governing Council). Its members are Carmen Bullón (Legal Officer, Development Law Service, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)), Lorenzo Cotula (Head of Programme – Law, Economies and Justice, International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)), Marek Dubovec (Director of Law Reform Programs, International Law Institute (ILI)), James Thuo Gathii (Professor, Loyola University Chicago), Hagen Henrÿ (Adjunct

[4] See https://www.unidroit.org/unidroit-holds-centenary-financial-markets-and-technology-workstream-workshop/.
[5] See https://www.unidroit.org/joint-eli-unidroit-event-in-paris-celebrates-the-unidroit-centenary-european-regional-conference-and-the-15th-eli-anniversary/.

Professor, University of Helsinki), Paola Iamiceli (Professor, University of Trento), and Leonardo Fabio Pastorino (Professor, University of Verona, and President of the World Union of Agricultural Law).

18. The PLA WS Committee held seven online meetings during 2025 and 2026, complemented by discussions and exchanges among members during the intersessional periods. Committee members contributed draft texts on their respective topics, which were subsequently discussed and refined through the Committee's meetings.

19. Two dedicated workshops were organised to gather feedback from external participants on the draft White Paper. The first was held in Rome on 19 June 2026, in the framework of the UNIDROIT International Programme for Law and Development Africa Plus (IPLD Africa Plus). It provided an opportunity to discuss the preliminary findings and policy recommendations of the draft White Paper with 28 legal professionals from 19 African countries. The second workshop took place in Rome on 18 September 2026, bringing together Committee members, participants in the BEPCAC Programme and other invited experts. It provided a further forum for legal professionals and experts to exchange views on the draft White Paper ahead of its finalisation.[6]

20. The White Paper resulting from the Committee's work provides an assessment of UNIDROIT's adopted instruments and ongoing projects in the field of private law and agriculture. It reflects on lessons learned from the development and implementation of these instruments and identifies areas in which future private law guidance by UNIDROIT could have a particularly significant impact, including the contractual governance of agri-food systems, agricultural enterprise structures and agricultural finance. The Committee's overall recommendations are set out in **Part Four, entitled "Reflections for Future Work"**, of the PLA White Paper, circulated separately to the General Assembly as document A.G. (86) 10 (f).

7. Sustainable Development

21. The Sustainable Development Workstream (SD WS) is coordinated by Legal Officers Giulia Stella Previti, Priscila Pereira de Andrade and Philine Wehling from the Secretariat, with the support of Legal Consultant Hui Fang. The Committee is chaired by Jeannette M.E. Tramhel (Independent Legal Consultant and former Senior Legal Consultant of UNIDROIT). The Committee members are Milot Ahma (Principal Counsel, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)), Lisa DeMarco (Senior Partner and CEO, Resilient LLP), Belinda Ellington (Senior Advisor, International Emissions Trading Association, and Consultant, Ellington Resolution Ltd), Giuditta Giardini (PhD, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore), Megumi Hara (Professor, Chuo University), Vesselina Haralampieva (Head of Sustainable Finance Governance & Regulation, EBRD), Emilia Onyema (Professor, SOAS University of London), Ulrich G. Schroeter (Professor, University of Basel), María Ignacia Vial Undurraga (Professor, Universidad de los Andes, Chile, and Member of the UNIDROIT Governing Council), Camila Villard Duran (Associate Professor, ESSCA School of Management), Elif Dilek Yilmaz (Associate, EBRD), and Catherine Bridge Zoller (Senior Counsel, EBRD).

22. The SD WS Committee held six online meetings during 2025 and 2026, complemented by discussions and exchanges among members during the intersessional periods. Committee members contributed draft texts on their respective topics, which were subsequently discussed and refined through the Committee's meetings. A hybrid Sustainable Development Workshop was held in Rome on 18 September 2026, bringing together Committee members and invited experts.[7]

23. The White Paper resulting from the Committee's work examines how UNIDROIT's instruments and activities advance sustainability across key private law domains. It provides a critical assessment of the Institute's legislative and non-legislative work from a sustainable development perspective,

[6] See https://www.unidroit.org/unidroit-holds-centenary-workshop-on-private-law-and-agriculture/.
[7] See https://www.unidroit.org/unidroit-holds-centenary-sustainable-development-workstream-workshop/.

including a mapping of UNIDROIT instruments against the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and identifies possible directions for future work. The Committee's recommendations are set out in **Part IV, entitled "Conclusion and Recommendations"**, of the SD White Paper and are summarised in Annexe II. The White Paper is circulated separately to the General Assembly as document A.G. (86) 10 (g).

III. Action to be taken

24. *The UNIDROIT Secretariat invites the General Assembly to take note of the significant scientific activities underpinning the celebration of the Centenary of UNIDROIT. Each White Paper and relevant recommendations will be presented by the Chair or representative of the relevant Committee and discussed during the 86th session of the General Assembly. Member States are invited to take part in the discussion and to acknowledge* the *work of the Centenary Workstreams.*