

INTRODUCTION TO THE INTERNATIONAL LAW COMMISSION

Spring 2025

REPORTING AND DOCUMENTATION

COMMISSION WEBSITE



INTERNATIONAL LAW COMMISSION

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The International Law Commission was established by the General Assembly, in 1947, to undertake the mandate of the Assembly, under article 13 (1) (a) of the Charter of the United Nations to "initiate studies and make recommendations for the purpose of ... encouraging the progressive development of international law and its codification".

In accordance with resolution [79/121](#) of 4 December 2024, the International Law Commission held its [seventy-sixth session](#) at the United Nations Office in Geneva (UNOG), in conference room XXI. As a consequence of the ongoing financial crisis facing the United Nations, the annual session of the Commission was reduced to five weeks and took place from 28 April to 30 May 2025.

» [Seventy-sixth session: Documents](#) | [Daily bulletin](#) | [2025 ILC Report](#) (final version)



International Law Commission, July 2023.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS



[2025 ILC REPORT \(FINAL VERSION\)](#)

15 August 2025 | The [2025 ILC report](#) has been issued.

[2025 ILC REPORT \(ADVANCE VERSION\)](#)

9 June 2025 | Advance unofficial version of the [2025 ILC report](#) is made available for the convenience of delegations. Official issuance in all six languages is expected by mid-August.

[ADOPTION OF THE REPORT](#)

30 May 2025 | The Commission adopted its report of the [seventy-sixth session](#) as a whole and thus concluded its work for that session.

[OTHER DECISIONS](#)

TYPES OF DOCUMENTATION

- Documentation is considered indispensable because it:
 - Constitutes a critical component in the process of consulting States and obtaining their views.
 - Assists individual States in understanding and interpreting the rules embodied in codification conventions.
 - Forms part of the *travaux préparatoires* of such conventions and is frequently referred to or quoted in the diplomatic correspondence of States, in arguments before the International Court of Justice and by the Court itself in its judgments.
 - Contributes to the dissemination of information about international law in accordance with the relevant United Nations programme.
 - Enables the Commission to fulfil, in accordance with its statute, the tasks entrusted to the Commission by the General Assembly.

Annual Report

- At the end of each session, the Commission adopts a report to the General Assembly describing the work of the session based on a draft prepared by the Rapporteur of the Commission, with the assistance of the Special Rapporteurs and the Secretariat.

Summary Records

- Since its establishment, the Commission has produced a summary record of its meetings, which include a summarized version of the Commission's deliberations for each meeting.

Yearbook of the Commission

- The Secretariat publishes an annual publication containing the summary records of the meetings of the Commission and the Commission's principal documents relating to that year's session.



ANNUAL REPORTS

- **Purpose:**
 - Keep the General Assembly informed on a regular basis of the Commission's progress on the various topics in its current programme.
 - Transmit draft provisions or reports with the accompanying recommendations to the General Assembly for consideration,
 - Publicize the Commission's drafts (see **Statute, Articles 16 and 21**)
- The report includes information concerning:
 - The organization of the session.
 - The progress of work.
 - The future work of the Commission on the topics given substantive consideration during the session.
 - The texts of draft provisions and commentaries adopted by the Commission during the session.
 - Any procedural recommendations of the Commission calling for a decision by the General Assembly.
 - Any other decisions and conclusions of the Commission.
- The Commission's annual reports are available [on the Commission's website](#).

- **In 1980**, the Commission concluded that the production of summary records constituted a necessary requirement for the procedures and methods of work of the Commission and for the process of codification of international law in general.
- **Purpose:** Because the Commission’s main task is creating drafts that may serve as a basis for elaboration by States to create binding legal instruments codifying international law, the debates and discussions held in the Commission on proposed formulations are of paramount importance, in terms of substance and wording, for the understanding of the rules proposed to States by the Commission.
 - On several occasions, the General Assembly and the Commission have qualified the summary records as the equivalent of *travaux préparatoires* because they reflect the legislative history of the Commission’s documents.
- Summary records are a means to make the Commission’s deliberations accessible to international institutions, learned societies, universities, and the public in general.
- **Availability:**
 - Finalized summary records are published in the *Yearbook of the International Law Commission*, volume I (which is [available on the Commission’s website](#)).
 - Provisional summary records are provided on the Commission’s website under the [“Documentation” tab for each Annual Session](#).





YEARBOOK OF THE COMMISSION

- **In 1955**, following a request by the Commission, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General arrange for the printing of the principal documents (e.g., reports, studies, principal draft resolutions, and amendments presented to the Commission) and summary records of the first seven sessions and the Commission's future sessions.
 - **Result:** the *Yearbook of the International Law Commission*.
- Printed in two volumes:
 - **Volume I:** contains the summary records of the meetings of the Commission.
 - **Volume II:** reproduces the principal documents, including the Commission's report to the General Assembly.
- Published in the official UN languages (English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Russian, and Chinese).
- The *Yearbook* is treated as an authoritative legal publication.
 - It is cited extensively in legal proceedings before international courts and tribunals, and by Governments in their official communications.
 - It may also serve as evidence of customary international law.
- The *Yearbook* is available on the [Commission's website](#).

AUDIO RECORDINGS

- The Commission also releases audio recordings of its public sessions on its website.
For example:

76th session - 1st part

ILC

📅 April 28, 2025 ⌚ 10:23 📍 Room XXI

[View all meetings of the same session](#)

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Sixth Committee, Interactive dialogue - General Assembly, 80th session

Legal Committee.

Audio Languages: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian,
Spanish, Original

29 October 2025