

MISE À JOUR DU PLAN STRATÉGIQUE

établie par le Bureau Permanent

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STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

drawn up by the Permanent Bureau

*Document préliminaire No 4 de février 2010 à l'intention
du Conseil d'avril 2010 sur les affaires générales et la politique de la Conférence*

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INTRODUCTION

Commission I on General Affairs and Policy of the Nineteenth Diplomatic Session, at its meeting of 22 – 24 April 2002, agreed that the implementation of the Strategic Plan of the Hague Conference on Private International Law, whose main directions Commission I supported, “should be reviewed on a regular basis by the organs responsible for General Affairs and Policy [...]”.¹ This decision was confirmed by the Nineteenth Session in December 2002 and is reflected in the Final Act of 13 December 2002 of that Session under B.2.

This Note provides a summary overview of the implementation of the Strategic Directions set out in Chapter IV of the Strategic Plan from April 2009 until March 2010. As mentioned in the Strategic Plan, the purpose of the Strategic Directions of the Plan is to assist the Permanent Bureau and the Members of the Organisation in continuing to adapt to the changing and growing demands on the work of the Hague Conference. They provide a framework for the way in which the Hague Conference carries out its mission and operations; the content of the work programme of the Conference at any particular time remains a decision for the Council on General Affairs and Policy. The Strategic Plan supports the Organisation’s budget planning for the coming years.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Strategic Direction 1

Increasing the global coverage of the Conference

Membership

- The Conference now has 69 Members:
 - Costa Rica (2002), Zambia (2004) and Colombia (2006) have been admitted but still need to accept the Statute. Pending the acceptance of the Statute by these States, they are being invited to attend meetings of the Hague Conference as observers.
 - In September and November 2009 respectively, the proposals to admit the Republic of the Philippines and the Republic of Lebanon were submitted to the Governments in accordance with Article 2(2) of the Statute.
- The Permanent Bureau continues to work towards increasing the Membership of the Hague Conference in a considered way as provided under paragraph [405] of the Strategic Plan.

Global coverage of Hague Conventions

- There are now 132 States in all parts of the world that are Contracting States to one or more Hague Conventions.
- Efforts were made, including the establishment of special funds to support attendance by experts from less-developed States, to ensure that a large number of non-Member States were involved in the 10–17 November 2009 Special Commission on the implementation of the 2007 Child Support Convention and of the 2007 Protocol on the Law Applicable to Maintenance Obligations (more than 120 experts from more than 50 States attended the Special Commission). Similar efforts are underway for the next Special Commission on the practical operation of the 1993 Convention on

¹ See “The Hague Conference on Private International Law Strategic Plan”, drawn up by the Permanent Bureau, April 2002, para. [008] which can be consulted on the Hague Conference website at < www.hcch.net > under the horizontal menu item “About HCCH”.

Intercountry Adoption which will be held in The Hague from 17 to 25 June 2010.

- The Special Programme for Latin American States for the promotion and training in respect of Hague Conventions has completed a fifth year.²
- A seminar was held in Guatemala on 7 and 8 September 2009 for Central American States on the transborder protection of children in adoption. This seminar was organised by the Hague Conference and UNICEF (with the support of the Swedish International Cooperation Agency) and involved 12 States (Argentina, Brazil, Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Chile, Cuba, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama and Peru).
- A Francophone Seminar on the 1993 Intercountry Adoption Convention organised in partnership with the French Institute of the Netherlands, the *Organisation internationale de la francophonie* (International Organization of the Francophonie) and the Governments of Belgium (French-speaking community), Canada, France and Switzerland took place in The Hague from 22 to 26 June 2009 involving 12 States of origin (Burkina Faso, Burundi, Guinea, Haiti, Ivory Coast, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritius, Rwanda, Seychelles, Togo and Viet Nam) and several NGOs.
- A Seminar on the Hague Conference and some of its major Conventions was held for a delegation of senior officials from Nigeria at the Permanent Bureau on 12 and 13 October 2009 which adopted a roadmap for the implementation of Conventions by the relevant Nigerian authorities.
- A first meeting of Latin American Judges of the International Hague Network of Judges was held on 4 December 2009 in Montevideo, Uruguay, involving judges from 12 States (Argentina, Chile, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Spain, Uruguay, the United States of America and Venezuela).
- A Seminar on Cross-Frontier Child Protection in the Southern and Eastern African Region organised in co-operation with the Government of South Africa and with the support of the Governments of Ireland and the Netherlands and the Hague Forum for Judicial Expertise involving more than 60 experts from 13 States in the region was held in Pretoria from 22 to 25 February 2010 (Angola, Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe).
- An International Judicial Conference on Cross-Border Family Relocation organised in co-operation with the International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (ICMEC) which will be held in Washington DC, United States of America from 23 to 25 March 2010 will be attended by more than 40 experts from more than 15 States.

Regional presence

- Further to the Third Asia Pacific Regional Conference where it was recommended "to encourage the Permanent Bureau, in co-operation with Member States in the Region, to consider ways in which its presence and representation in the Region might be strengthened", consultations are underway concerning the possibilities for the establishment of such regional presence in one of those Member States.
- Consultations are also underway with various States in the Latin American Region on the idea of further reinforcing the regional presence of the Conference, building upon the successful work carried out by the office of the Legal Liaison Officer for Latin America.

² See Annual Report 2009, drawn up by the Permanent Bureau for the attention of the Council of April 2010 on General Affairs and Policy, Chapter IV.

Visibility

- The Conference continues to modernise its website – more than 11,000 pages are visited daily (more than 1,800 different visitors per day) – with a view to facilitating bilingual usage, and making all the information accessible through a database, including documents in languages other than the official languages of the Conference. Since 31 March 2009, most of the information on the website has been available through a separate home page in Spanish. By the spring of 2010, the same will be available in German. Information in other non-official languages is available with only one click from anywhere on the website.
- During the last year, the Secretary General and members of the Permanent Bureau made official visits to, lectured or gave seminars in: Argentina, Austria, Australia, Belgium, Benin, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China (mainland and Hong Kong SAR), Costa Rica, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Mauritius, Mexico, Namibia, Nepal, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Viet Nam.
- During the past 12 months the Permanent Bureau welcomed interns and officials on secondment from the following countries: Austria, Australia, Canada, China, Czech Republic, France, India, Korea, Morocco, Peru, Singapore, Spain, Switzerland and the United States of America.
- Discussions are continuing with the Governments of Portugal and Brazil about the possibility of establishing translation in Portuguese of the Hague Conventions through a joint effort of Portuguese-speaking countries.

Strategic Direction 2

Being selective in relation to the projects undertaken by the Conference and consolidating post-Convention services

The Conference continues to focus equally on its two core activities – the development and the monitoring of Conventions, including the provision of unique post-Convention services. At the same time it is increasingly engaged in providing education, training and technical assistance aimed at promoting and improving the implementation and application of Conventions by judges, Central Authorities and others.

Development of Conventions and other non-binding norms

- Further to the adoption on 23 November 2007 of the *Convention on the International Recovery of Child Support and Other Forms of Family Maintenance*, a revised draft Explanatory Report on the Convention was circulated in August 2009 to Heads of Delegations to the Twenty-First Session for their comments. The Explanatory Report on the Convention was finalised in November 2009 in time for the 10-17 November 2009 Special Commission.
- Further to the adoption on 23 November 2007 of the *Protocol on the Law Applicable to Maintenance Obligations*, a revised draft Explanatory Report on the Protocol was circulated in September 2009 to Heads of Delegations to the Twenty-First Session for their comments. The Explanatory Report on the Protocol was finalised in November 2009 in time for the 10 - 17 November 2009 Special Commission.
- A Spanish version of these Reports is being prepared by Professor Alegría Borrás.

- Since spring 2009, a Working Party has been meeting by conference call to promote the development of mediation structures to help resolve cross-border disputes concerning custody of, or contact with, children especially between States Parties to the 1980 Child Abduction Convention and non-States Parties.
- During the 10-17 November 2009 Special Commission, the findings of a Questionnaire on the development of a Protocol to the *Hague Convention of 23 November 2007 on the International Recovery of Child Support and Other Forms of Family Maintenance* to deal with the international recovery of maintenance in respect of vulnerable persons were discussed.
- On 21 and 22 January 2010, a Working Group on choice of law in international contracts held its first meeting in The Hague. The Group was set up by the Permanent Bureau to develop a draft non-binding instrument on this subject.
- Work is under way in relation to the development of a proposal for a draft Protocol to the *Hague Convention of 25 October 1980 on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction*.
- Work is ongoing with regard to the development of general principles for judicial communications within the context of the International Hague Network of Judges.

Post-Convention services

- The Special Commission on the implementation of the 2007 Child Support Convention and of the 2007 Protocol on the Law Applicable to Maintenance Obligations met from 10 to 17 November 2009.
- The November 2009 Special Commission reviewed, amended and adopted 12 Recommended Forms and a Country Profile for the implementation of the 2007 Child Support Convention.
- The November 2009 Special Commission reviewed an Implementation Checklist and a Draft Practical Handbook for Caseworkers for the implementation of the 2007 Child Support Convention. Both will be amended and finalised in the light of comments made and matters raised prior and during the Special Commission.
- The November 2009 Special Commission gave its support in principle to the continuing phased development by the Permanent Bureau of the iSupport system for the 2007 Child Support Convention.
- For a detailed account of the post-Convention services concerning the Children's Conventions, Maintenance, Adults and Cohabitation see Preliminary Document No 5 drawn up for the attention of the Council on General Affairs and Policy of 2010.
- Work is underway with regard to the Guide to Good Practice under the 1980 Child Abduction Convention to finalise Part IV on the enforcement of orders made under the 1980 Convention by spring 2010.
- Work is underway with regard to the Guide to Good Practice under the 1980 Child Abduction Convention to develop Part V on mediation in the context of the 1980 Child Abduction Convention.
- A standard country profile to be used by Contracting States to the 1980 Child Abduction Convention is currently under development in consultation with a number of interested States.
- A draft of the Guide to Good Practice Part II on Accreditation and Accredited Bodies under the 1993 Intercountry Adoption Convention will be the subject

of discussion during the June 2010 Special Commission on the Practical Operation of the 1993 Intercountry Adoption Convention.

- During the past year, four model forms for country profiles were updated and tested: for States of origin and receiving States that are Party, and States of origin and receiving States that are not Party to the 1993 Intercountry Adoption Convention.
- Work on a Practical Handbook on the Operation of the 1996 International Child Protection Convention is well underway.
- For a detailed task list and status of implementation of Conclusions and Recommendations adopted by the Special Commission on the Practical Operation of the Hague Apostille, Service, Taking of Evidence and Access to Justice Conventions see Preliminary Document No 15 drawn up for the attention of the Council on General Affairs and Policy of 2010.
- The ABCs of Apostilles, a publication for the general public on “How to ensure that your public documents will be recognised abroad” will be published in both paper and electronic form by the spring of 2010.
- Work is underway to finalise a comprehensive Practical Handbook on the operation of the Apostille Convention.
- Work is underway to develop sections of a possible future Practical Handbook on the operation of the Evidence Convention.
- Work is underway to finalise a Draft Implementation Checklist on the 2005 Choice of Court Convention.
- The International Child Abduction Database (INCADAT) website now includes 850 summaries in English and French and more than 600 summaries in Spanish. During the past 12 months efforts continued to expand the commentary section with a view to comparing and contrasting other case law. A new maintenance tool for the database was also developed during the past year. In the coming months the user interface and functionality of the INCADAT website will be improved.
- The iChild electronic case management system (donated by WorldReach Software (Canada)) in relation to the 1980 Convention on Child Abduction has been implemented in more than 10 Central Authorities and further implementation efforts are under way.
- The Permanent Bureau has supplemented its website to collect the statistics of the States Parties to the 1980 Convention on Child Abduction for the purpose of the International Child Abduction Statistical Database (INCASTAT). Since April 2009, INCASTAT has been available directly to more than 90 Central Authorities in a new database environment.
- Work has resumed on the ICASTAT project for the collection of statistics from States Parties to the 1993 Intercountry Adoption Convention for the purpose of establishing a special database on the subject.
- Preliminary work on the use of modern technologies in relation to the Service and Evidence Conventions has started.
- Work on the development of fillable electronic forms for the Evidence Convention has started.
- Revision of the Apostille Section of the Hague Conference website and creation of an Evidence Section have started.
- Work relating to the promotion and implementation of the electronic Apostille Pilot Program (e-APP) is ongoing. Eleven jurisdictions have implemented at least one of the two components of the e-APP; several others are actively studying the e-APP.

- The *5th International Forum on the electronic Apostille Pilot Program (e-APP) and Digital Authentication*, organised by the International Union of Notaries and the Hague Conference was held in London, United Kingdom, on 13 June 2009.
- The Permanent Bureau published Volumes XIV and XV of *The Judges' Newsletter on International Child Protection*, the focus of which were respectively:
 - *the Hague Convention of 23 November 2007 on the International Recovery of Child Support and Other Forms of Family Maintenance and its Protocol on the Law Applicable to Maintenance Obligations*; and,
 - the Judicial Conference of 15 and 16 January 2009 on Direct Judicial Communications on Family Law Matters and the Development of Judicial Networks, jointly organised by the European Commission and the Hague Conference.

All the volumes of *The Judges' Newsletter* are available in English and French, as well as some in Spanish, on the Hague Conference website. Since the autumn of 2009, the Judges' Newsletter has been available in a new electronic format that allows direct access to each article separately in html and pdf formats, in addition to the pdf version of the Volume.

- The Permanent Bureau continues its work on direct international judicial communications under the 1980 Convention and continues to be involved in the organisation of judicial seminars.
- The International Hague Network of Judges now includes 48 Network Judges from 35 States compared to 39 Network Judges from 26 States a year ago. During the last year, judges from Costa Rica, Finland, Germany, Israel, Kenya, Nicaragua, South Africa, Spain and Venezuela were designated to the Network.
- Development and funding efforts continue on the development of the iSupport electronic case management and Internet-based communication system in support of the 2007 Child Support Convention and its Protocol on Applicable Law.
- Funding efforts continue for the promotion of the e-Register component of the e-APP.
- The Permanent Bureau continues to receive and answer a steadily increasing number of governmental and individual requests relating to the practical operation of, in particular, the Abduction, Adoption, Child Support, Service, Evidence and Apostille Conventions.
- A translation in Spanish of the *Transfrontier Contact Concerning Children* publication is underway.
- Translations of the Practical Handbook on the Service Convention in Chinese (two versions), Portuguese and Spanish are underway.

Legal education, training and technical assistance

- The Permanent Bureau has facilitated international judicial seminars and conferences such as the Francophone Seminar on the 1993 Hague Inter-country Adoption Convention, held in The Hague from 22 to 26 June 2009, the meeting of Latin American Judges of the International Network of Judges, held in Montevideo, Uruguay, on 4 December 2009, the Seminar on Cross-Frontier Child Protection in the Southern and Eastern African Region, held in Pretoria, South Africa from 22 to 25 February 2010 and the International Judicial Conference on Cross-Border Family Relocation organised in co-operation with ICMEC which will be held in Washington DC, United States of America from 23 to 25 March 2010.

- The Permanent Bureau also actively participated in training and legal education activities organised by: the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the *Organisation internationale de la Francophonie* (OIF), *Mercado Común del Sur* (Mercosur), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Organisation of American States (OAS), the Inter-American Children's Institute (IIN), the African Union, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OCSE), the International Social Service (ISS), the International Association of Women Judges (IAWJ), the International Bar Association (IBA), the International Law Association (ILA), the Centre for International Legal Cooperation (CILC), the International Swaps and Derivatives Associations Inc. (ISDA), the *Association Africaine des Hautes Juridictions Francophones* (AA-HJF), the Inter-American Bar Association (IABA), the American Bar Association (ABA), the *Association Louis Chatin*, the Nordic Adoption Council, the Intercountry Adoption Association of Ireland, LegaCarta, the Mauritius Bankers Association, the National Child Support Enforcement Association (NCSEA), the National Notary Association (NNA), the National Association of Secretaries of States (NASS), the International Union of Latin Notaries (UINL), the International Association of Judicial Officers (UIHJ), the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA), the Academy of European Law (ERA), the European Association for International Education (EAIE), the *Deutsche Stiftung für Internationale rechtliche Zusammenarbeit* (IRZ), the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit* (GTZ), International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children (ICMEC), the T.M.C. Asser Institute, the Australian and New Zealand College of Notaries (ANZCN) and the Municipality of The Hague, the Netherlands.
- Through the training and technical assistance programme for the effective implementation of the 1993 Intercountry Adoption Convention (ICATAP), the Permanent Bureau is providing extensive technical assistance to Cambodia and Guatemala. Assistance has started with Nepal and Mexico and it has been offered to Ethiopia, Kenya and Viet Nam. Assistance has also been requested by: Azerbaijan, Mauritius and Panama. The programme is financed through the Supplementary Budget. The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child regularly recommends to countries of origin to join the 1993 Intercountry Adoption Convention and to seek technical assistance from the Permanent Bureau.
- Through the Legal Co-operation and Litigation Assistance Programme (LCLAP), a series of seminars and presentations were held in the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Georgia and Nicaragua.
- Through the Child Abduction and Child Protection Conventions Assistance Programme (CACPA), assistance was jointly organised by the Hague Conference and the Ukrainian-European Policy and Legal Advice Centre (UEPLAC) upon the request of the Ukrainian Government. The Permanent Bureau is also providing extensive technical assistance to Mexico under the same programme.

In consolidating its post-Conventions services, the Conference will continue to develop partnerships with States, governmental and non-governmental organisations, academic and research institutions, and will continue to concentrate its efforts on activities to which it brings added value. The Permanent Bureau continues its work towards the establishment of more systemic training programmes through the Hague Conference International Centre for Judicial Studies and Technical Assistance.

Partnerships with States and governmental and non-governmental organisations

- Through the Supplementary Budget and other *ad hoc* funding requests (Intercountry Adoption Technical Assistance Programme, Conferences and Judicial seminars including the meeting of Latin American Judges of the International Network of Judges and the International Judicial Conference on Cross-Border Family Relocation), the Conference received during the last 12 months (1 April 2009 – 31 January 2010) support by way of contributions or donations from the following States: Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States of America (see L.c. A No 3(10) of 26 February 2010 and L.c. ON No 4(10) dated 26 February 2010).
- Two secondments of State officials were arranged with Canada, one with the *Gouvernement du Québec* (part-time since September 2005) and one with the Government of British Columbia (full-time from October 2008 until April 2009) and one secondment was arranged with the Government of Valencia (Spain) (full-time from January until June 2010).
- One intern from the *Barreau du Québec* was funded by the *Gouvernement du Québec*, Canada (6 months – from February to July 2010).
- The third intern under the Peter Nygh Internship Programme (Australia) joined the Organisation in 2010 (6 months – from February to July 2010).
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Argentina renewed its support to the Latin-American Programme by providing office facilities to the Liaison Legal Officer.

Partnerships with academic and research institutes

- In 2009, New York University provided two summer interns to the Permanent Bureau.
- During the last 12 months different research projects have been undertaken and / or completed with, in particular, Cardiff Law School (United Kingdom) and the University of Aberdeen (United Kingdom). The Permanent Bureau maintains ongoing co-operation with a number of universities and academic institutions around the world such as the Law Faculty of the *Université Jean Moulin*, Lyon (France), the Law Faculty of the University of Groningen (Netherlands), the Tokyo University Law School and the Tohoku University School of Law (Japan).

Strategic Direction 3

Enhancing working methods and reducing costs by providing flexibility in the development process

New working methods

- Meetings by conference calls are increasingly taking place.
- Internet-based systems are used to provide demonstrations of the iChild software, the INCASTAT database and e-APP to interested authorities.
- Videoconferencing is increasingly being used.
- The Permanent Bureau is considering the acquisition of translation software.

Strategic Direction 4

Increasing communication and co-operation with other international organisations

Increasing communication

- The Conference continues to modernise its website with a view to facilitating bilingual usage, and making all the information accessible through a database, including documents in languages other than the official languages of the Conference.

Increasing co-operation

- Preparations for the conclusion of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Asian African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO) are underway.
- During the past 12 months the Permanent Bureau has intensified its co-operation with other international organisations with regard to horizontal issues for which they have a common interest.

During the last 12 months, the Permanent Bureau co-operated with the following organisations:

International and transnational governmental organisations

- African Union
- Asian African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO)
- Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)
- Bank for International Settlements (BIS)
- *Commission internationale de l'état civil* (CIEC)
- Commonwealth Secretariat
- Council of Europe
- European Central Bank (ECB)
- European Union / European Community
- Inter-American Children's Institute (IIN)
- International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO)
- International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT)
- International Monetary Fund (IMF)
- MERCOSUR
- Organisation of American States (OAS)
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
- *Organisation internationale de la Francophonie* (OIF)
- Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana (SICA)
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL)
- United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
- World Bank
- World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO)
- World Trade Organisation (WTO)

It is important, in particular, to mention the annual co-ordination meeting between the heads of the Secretariats of UNCITRAL, UNIDROIT and the Hague Conference.

International non-governmental organisations

- American Association of Private International Law (ASADIP)
- *Association Africaine des Hautes Juridictions Francophones*
- *Association des Hautes Juridictions de cassation des pays ayant en partage l'usage du français*
- *Association internationale de droit judiciaire (AIDJ)*
- *Association internationale francophone des intervenants auprès des familles séparées (AIFI)*
- *Association internationale des Magistrats de la Jeunesse et de la Famille (AIMJF)*
- Australian & New Zealand College of Notaries (ANZCN)
- *Centro de Estudios de Derecho Economía y Política (CEDEP)*
- ChildONEurope
- Conference of Central Securities Depositories
- Defence for Children International (DCI)
- Euradopt
- European Federation for Missing and Sexually Exploited Children
- European Network on Parental Child Abduction
- Financial Market Lawyers Group (FMLG)
- Inter-American Bar Association (IABA)
- International Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers (IAML)
- International Association of Judicial Officers (UIHJ)
- International Association of Women Judges (IAWJ)
- International Bar Association (IBA)
- International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (ICMEC)
- International Chamber of Commerce (ICC)
- International Foster Care Organisation (IFCO)
- International Law Association (ILA)
- International Swaps and Derivatives Association (ISDA)
- International Social Service (ISS)
- International Society of Family Law (ISFL)
- International Union of Latin Notaries (UINL)
- Latin American Foster Care Network (RELAF)
- Nordic Adoption Council
- US-Mexico Bar Association
- World Legal Forum

Strategic Direction 5

Enhancing the management of internal information

- The Permanent Bureau continues its implementation of a 2003 Report on the management of internal information and documents, prepared by an outside consultant, in order to increase corporate memory, consolidate the filing system (including electronic filing), enhance the maintenance of the library and improve the use of computer technology to that effect (see para. [437] of the Strategic Plan).

- During the past year, the Permanent Bureau worked on the reorganisation of its electronic files following the consistent and coherent classification numbering system implemented last year to reorganise its paper files and archives systems resulting in an effective and logical system. Work is underway to make the new classification system bilingual.
- During the past year, the Permanent Bureau worked on the development of an Intranet to enhance the distribution and availability of internal information and facilitate the retrieval of documents within the Permanent Bureau.

Strategic Direction 6

Matching resources and demands by making the decision process more transparent and informed and by increasing the capacity to seek additional funding

- The Council on General Affairs and Policy of the Conference, which will meet on 7 to 9 April 2010, will have before it for its information a Proposed Budget for Financial Year LVI (1 July 2010 – 30 June 2011) (see Strategic Plan, para. [427]), see Preliminary Document No 8.
- An interim Report on the Supplementary Budget for Financial Year LV (1 July 2009 – 30 June 2010) was sent to Member States in February 2010 (L.c. A No 3(10) and L.c. ON No 4(10)) and a Proposed Supplementary Budget for Financial Year LVI (1 July 2010 – 30 June 2011) will be presented to the Council of Diplomatic Representatives, and, for information, to the Council on General Affairs and Policy of the Conference on 7 to 9 April 2010 inviting all Members to make voluntary contributions to provide funding for activities not covered by the regular budget, see Preliminary Document Nos 9A and 9B.
- With regard to the workload, timelines and budget implications for 2010-2011 in relation to the work programme of the Permanent Bureau, the projects concerning the Children's Conventions, Maintenance, Adults and Cohabitation and the task list and status of implementation of Conclusions and Recommendations adopted by the Special Commission on the Practical Operation of the Hague Apostille, Service, Taking of Evidence and Access to Justice Conventions see respectively Preliminary Documents Nos 2, 5 and 15.
- The Secretary General is consulting with a building contractor on possibilities to enlarge the number of working stations and offices in the main building of the Permanent Bureau.
- The Council of Diplomatic Representatives at its meeting of 6 July 2009 approved the move from a budgeted to a financed pension system. Further proposals, in particular on the governance structure of the Pension Fund, for submission to the Council of Diplomatic Representatives, will be discussed by a Working Group consisting of diplomatic representatives of Member States on 10 March 2010.