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## INTERNATIONAL AFRICAN LAW ASSOCIATION NEWS

### BRUSSELS CONFERENCE ON THE PARTICIPATION OF EUROPEAN RESEARCH AND TEACHING INSTITUTIONS IN AFRICAN LEGAL DEVELOPMENT

The International African Law Association/Association Internationale de Droit Africain convened a conference in Brussels from July 2nd to July 4th, 1969, which was devoted to the participation of European research and teaching institutions in African legal development. There were about thirty participants representing American, Belgian, English, French, German, Italian and Scandinavian faculties or research institutes; international organisations such as the Common Market and the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT) were also represented at the Conference. Each institution had prepared a brief note in which its achievements and plans in the field of African law were described. The sessions, which were presided over successively by Professors Wengler (Berlin), Young (Northwestern), Costanzo (Perugia), Allott (London) and Rubens (Leuven), permitted an examination and comparison in the first two days of various aspects of work already done, and of the main lines of future activities, both in research and in teaching, in European faculties and institutes.

During these discussions, one of the points most frequently underlined was the need for a co-ordination of European efforts in the field. As a result, the last session was devoted to the development of such European co-operation in the service of African Law. The Conference decided in principle that the creation of a European Centre for African Law would facilitate this co-operation. Among the tasks of the centre would be the preparation of a union list of teachers and researchers in the field of African Law; the development of contacts between the latter and African institutions of teaching and research; the encouragement of exchange of documentation between interested persons and institutions; assistance with the acquisition of African legal materials; the organisation of meetings between teachers and researchers from all parts of the world whose main interest is African law. A preparatory committee consisting of Messrs. Allott, Conac, Costanzo, Spreen and Vanderlinden was asked to make a preliminary study of the

problems and possibilities connected with the creation of such a Centre, and to report back to the Council of the International African Law Association/Association Internationale de Droit Africain.

Finally, the Conference welcomed the announcement of a meeting which would be held in Rome in the summer of 1970, devoted to the unification of law and private international law in Africa. It would be organised jointly by UNIDROIT and the Italian Section of the Association.