the LOSC best, rather than that of a unified court. It may well take several years and a new generation of judges, which has not been as intimately involved in the negotiations of the LOSC as the present one, before ITLOS can achieve its full potential as a provider of judicial services.

Stefan Talmon


Internet: General information on ITLOS, documents and publications, the decisions of the Tribunal and its press releases may be found on the Court’s website: www.itlos.org.
c) development of telecommunication: serving as catalyst for the extension of telecommunication services in the developing countries, in cooperation with the IBRD (→ World Bank, World Bank Group) and the Regional Economic Commissions of the United Nations (→ Economic Commissions, Regional).

II. Organizational Structure
a) Plenipotentiary Conference: The Conference is the supreme organ of the ITU, in which all ITU members are represented, and which is convened normally every five years. It determines the general policies for the ITU and elects the members of the other ITU organs.

b) Administrative Council: The council comprises 46 members, elected by the Plenipotentiary Conference, and normally convenes annually. It acts in the intervals between the sessions of the Conference on behalf of the latter, and is responsible for the implementation of the decisions of the Conference and of the tasks assigned by the Convention.

c) World or Regional Administrative Conferences may be convened in the interval between the sessions of the ITU Conference, to offer an opportunity to react to new technological developments.

d) The telecommunication sector, the sector of standardization and the sector for the telecommunication development of the ITU dispose of their own advisory organs, each headed by a director: the International Frequency Registration Board, the International Radio Consultative Committee, the International Telegraph and Telephone Consultative Committee and the Telecommunications Development Board.

e) The General Secretariat: Directed by a Secretary-General, who is elected by the ITU Conference. It is entrusted with the administrative and budgetary planning of the ITU, monitors the compliance with the ITU regulations and documents and publishes the results of the work of the ITU organs.

The ITU cooperates closely with other specialized agencies of the UN, e.g. → ICAO, → IMO, → UPU, → UNESCO, and → WMO, as these are all concerned with telephone and radio services.

III. New Challenges
More than any other specialized agency of the UN, the ITU has been forced to address new technological developments (satellite radio services, telefax services, digital radio and television, the Internet) and has had to deal in this context also with the economic and political aspects of these developments. In this process ITU has succeeded in ensuring the further technological development of the telecommunication systems in a worldwide balancing of interests, so that in the meantime the rapid global communication of news, the global transmission of radio and television programmes and the global transfer of data concerning economic transactions, has become feasible.

The economic, social and cultural problems connected with these developments (→ Globalization) were for many years mainly discussed in other UN organs and organizations.

The ITU, as a clearing and organization center of international telecommunication, seemed for a long time to be overtaxed with these latter roles. That is why the debate about the world information and communication order, as it was initiated by the developing countries, was held under the aegis of UNESCO for some decades. The discussions on the question whether the predominance of the Western industrialized countries in the field of private enterprise in the television and radio sector, in the area of news agencies and in the field of satellite telecommunication etc., might result in endangering the freedom of information and of expression, were predominantly held in UNESCO circles and only to a small extent in ITU bodies.

It was at least a first sign of a new awareness of the complex and urgent sociopolitical aspects of the problems in the ITU, that the ITU Conference launched in its 1998 Conference in Minneapolis an initiative for a World Summit on the Information Society.