

**Permanent Mission of Austria**  
**to the United Nations in New York**

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**Sixth Committee**

**Agenda Item 83: Rule of law at the national and international levels**

**Statement by Catherine Quidenus**  
**Representative of Austria**

**New York, 10 October 2012**

Mr. Chair,

Since this is the first time my delegation is taking the floor, we would like to express our great pleasure to see you as Chair presiding the work of the Sixth Committee. We warmly congratulate you and all the members of the Bureau on your election and assure you of our full co-operation and support. We are confident that under your able guidance the session of our Committee will be very successful and productive.

We fully align ourselves with the statement made by the European Union earlier today.

International law and the rule of law are the foundations of the international system. Austria strongly believes that a rules-based international system with clear and predictable rules, which equally apply to all Member States, is an essential precondition for lasting peace, security, economic development and social progress.

The high-level meeting of the General Assembly on 24 September 2012 provided an excellent opportunity for all member states to renew their commitment to the rule of law at the national and international levels, both through the joint declaration adopted by our heads of state and government, and the individual pledges made by numerous Member States. Also the high interest in the meeting itself showed that member states attach utmost importance to the issue. In order to keep the momentum we would welcome meetings of this kind also in the future. Austria stands ready to contribute actively to follow-up initiatives to the high-level meeting.

The rule of law is a fundamental pillar for economic growth. The International Development Law Organization (IDLO) has been a pioneer in this field. Both small businesses and large corporations are more likely to thrive where laws are clearly defined, known to the public and applied neutrally. In this regard, we also commend the contribution of UNCITRAL to the promotion of the rule of law at the national and international levels, including in the context of international trade, long-term development, conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction.

Most importantly, the challenge of corruption must be addressed. No State is immune to corruption, regardless of social and economic development. Corruption is a true enemy to development. It shies away investors and adds to more inequalities in societies. The cost of corruption is paid by society as a whole.

The key to success is education and training how to fight and prevent corrupt practices. The International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA) in Austria provides anti-corruption education and professional training as well as technical assistance. The agreement on the establishment of IACA has been ratified by 35 member states and we invite other States to join.

In conclusion, we would like to stress that our efforts to promote the rule of law do not serve an abstract goal, but the protection of the rights and interests of individuals. Austria, also in its role as coordinator of the Group of Friends of the Rule of Law, will continue to give utmost priority to this subject.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.