

THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

SIXTY-EIGHT SESSION

SIXTH COMMITTEE

AGENDA ITEM 85: The rule of law at the national and international levels

Check against delivery

S T A T E M E N T

by

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Permanent Mission of the Republic of Serbia to the United Nations

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Mr. Chairman,

As Serbia has aligned itself with the statement of the European Union, in my statement I shall emphasize some points from the national perspective.

The Republic of Serbia actively supports all efforts in establishing the rule of law at a global level, in the context of modern international relations and, guided by the principles of the UN Charter, eliminating threats to peace and security in the world.

We strongly support all initiatives and programs aimed at conflict prevention and peace facilitation to resolve disputes in crisis areas which are being undertaken within the UN system, as well as regional initiatives. We have acceded to all major international instruments related to non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control and we are committed to the full and systematic implementation of the obligations assumed.

Serbia reiterates its firm commitment to an international order based on international law, which is in the core of the UN principles and activities. Both the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognize the relevance of the rule of law for lasting international peace. The rule of law is a necessary precondition for sustainable peace and development in any society, and justice and the rule of law are preconditions for the maintenance of peace and security at the international level.

Given the importance of accountability to the rule of law, combating impunity is an obligation. With its efforts and results achieved in cooperation with the ICTY, Serbia has contributed to the strengthening of international justice and further normalization and improvement of relations among the states of the Balkans. At the same time, it made significant contribution to the process of strengthening confidence in the work of national and international institutions.

Serbia attaches great importance to transitional justice as an essential component of efforts to strengthen the rule of law and a viable contribution to peace and security. This has been particularly important in our region in the context of reconciliation and facing the past.

In this context, Serbia attaches great importance to the work of the International Criminal Court and is committed to serving its goals. The fact that the Court has become a cornerstone for prosecuting perpetrators of the most serious international crimes in a relatively short time should not make us complacent in the belief that the fight for a strong and efficient system of international criminal justice is over. This is a continuing process that will take resolve and persistence. The Rome Statute serves as a prime example of mutually reinforcing linkage between international and national rule of law efforts, as the ICC is complementary to national jurisdictions and an important catalyst for the evolution of domestic systems of justice.

We believe that the next stage of development of the international criminal justice system will be characterized by the efforts directed towards finding the most appropriate mechanisms to enable national judicial systems to take over the tasks imposed by the principle of complementarity.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to commend the Secretary-General for his leadership in advancing the issue of the rule of law. Serbia supports the activities of the UN in promoting the rule of law and the work of the Rule of Law Coordination and Resource Group. Such efforts should be based on the fundamental principles of the UN Charter, namely, respect for national sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in internal affairs.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that the rule of law can not exist without the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms as its integral component. By its very nature, it is also one of the basic preconditions for economic, social and political development of states.