



ARMENIA

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UNGA 69/ SIXTH COMMITTEE / AGENDA ITEM: 82 - THE RULE OF LAW AT THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS

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Mr. Chair,

In light of this year's discussion theme "Sharing states national practices in strengthening the rule of law through access to justice", Armenia welcomes the opportunity to exchange thoughts on the rule of law at the national and international levels in the 6th Committee.

We take note with satisfaction of Secretary-General's new report on this agenda item, which indicates a wide range of the UN activities supporting states' capacities for an improved access to justice. We thank the Secretary-General for detailed elaboration on the undertakings aimed at a greater coordination and coherence among UN entities and with donors and recipients, and systematically addressing aspects of the rule of law in the organization's relevant activities. In this respect, the efforts by the Rule of Law Coordination and Resource Group and the Rule of Law Unit are highly appreciated.

As the United Nations is getting closer to embark on its next journey of post-2015 sustainable development agenda, the linkages between the rule of law and the three inter-linked and mutually reinforcing pillars of peace and security, human rights and development affirmed in the Declaration of 2012 GA High-level Meeting need to be further strengthened. Recalling the deliberations of Open Working Group on SDGs we see the national and global processes involving the rule of law as mutually inclusive - not exclusive. While recognizing the national ownership of the rule of law, we believe that promoting the notion of the rule of law at international level needs to be highlighted as well.

Armenia reiterates its strong support to strengthening the international justice system which is fundamental for peaceful settlement of disputes and promotion of access to justice. In

this context, it is important to recall the duty of all states to refrain from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes and principles of the UN and to settle their international disputes by peaceful means in accordance with Chapter VI and by maintaining international peace and security, and justice.

As a nation who experienced the first genocide of the 20th century and continues to face the denial of this horror, Armenia reaffirms its strong support to the fight against impunity for the most serious crimes, such as genocide and crimes against humanity. These crimes may be committed in situations where international judicial mechanisms are inefficient and the integrity of state's internal justice system is seriously challenged by the perpetrators of the crime. We are of the view that human rights, including peoples' right to self-determination, the rule of law and democracy are mutually reinforcing and belong to the universal and indivisible core values and principles of the United Nations.

Mr. Chair,

It is our firm belief that it is possible to effectively promote the rule of law internationally only if it has strong domestic footing. Armenia's Constitution guarantees that all persons are equal before the law and everyone is entitled to equal access to the legal system. Since regaining its independence Armenia recognized that broad based reform and institution building in the public administration was necessary to underpin its private sector led growth agenda. One of the key building blocks has been the creation of a more efficient, effective, and independent judiciary to be better able to provide services to citizens, promote more predictable rule of law, and better enforce contracts and encourage commercial activities and investments. Legal reforms included the creation of a three-tiered structure of courts of general jurisdiction under the 1995 Constitution. A second phase of judicial reform began with a constitutional amendment in 2005 intended to reduce the dominant role of the presidency in the court system and increase the independence of the judiciary. A Judicial Code passed in 2007 further reorganized the courts and introduced a doctrine analogous to precedent in common law systems. Since the last year broad public discussions have been underway in Armenia to scrutinize the need of new constitutional reforms aimed at further improving the governance system and increasing transparency and accountability. The judicial reform agenda remains an ongoing priority for the Government.

The Armenian government, in close collaboration with its international partners, has been working recently towards

enhancing the institutional capacity of the Independent Bar Association, improving the quality of legal education, fostering an effective environment for human rights protection, and increasing the judiciary's knowledge of international courts including the European Court of Human Rights.

In closing, I would like to underline Armenia's determination to closely work with other member states and international organizations for the sake of the common goal of further enhancing the rule of law.

I thank you.