



Statement

by

Lebanon

**at the
Sixth Committee**

Item 82: “The rule of law at the national and international levels”

Thursday, October 9, 2014

Check Against Delivery

*Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations
866 United Nations Plaza, Suite 531, New York, NY. 10017*

Mr. Chairman,

We welcome the discussion on the states' national practices in strengthening the access to justice and take this opportunity to address this matter of paramount importance. We also take note of the recent report submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 68/116.

Mr. Chairman,

The several thematic debates and panels on this matter held these past two years have enabled us to voice our strong belief that the rule of law, cornerstone of free and democratic societies, lies on intangible values such as the guarantee of fundamental rights. Access to justice constitutes one of them and is deeply embedded in the Lebanese legal system.

Indeed, the preamble of our Constitution, underlines Lebanon's abidance by the UN Charter, its covenants, as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which proclaims, *inter alia*, the right to have one's case heard by an impartial and competent tribunal.

Furthermore, the Lebanese domestic legislation guarantees the right for any individual, Lebanese or foreigner, to seek remedy before courts. Such principle of non-discrimination stems from international instruments Lebanon has duly signed and ratified, notably the 1965 Convention on the Elimination of all forms of racial discrimination. Another example of equality of treatment can be illustrated in one of our legal provisions that exempts foreign litigants to make a deposit pertaining to the judiciary costs.

Mr. Chairman,

Earlier this year, the Parliament enacted a law on domestic violence, aiming at ensuring women and children's rights and safety. This new legislation offers vulnerable groups, victims of domestic violence, legal recourse, *via*:

- First, the assignment of a public prosecutor in each governorate to receive complaints and investigate domestic violence.
- Secondly, the establishment of a special unit in the internal security forces to process complaints.

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Mr. Chairman,

Bearing in mind the maxim *Nemo censetur ignorare legem* or "nobody is supposed to ignore the law", we are aware that access to justice also implies knowledge of the law. This is why, according to our Constitution, laws become effective only once publicized in the official journal. Additionally, Lebanon seeks to enhance its collaboration with other key partners, such as NGOs, civil society and UN Bodies to ensure an enlarged visibility of its legal arsenal to foreigners.

To this end, the Lebanese authorities, in cooperation with the OHCHR, the International Labour Organization and Lebanese NGOS, have put in place the unified contract to protect domestic migrant workers. This written contract must be in both Arabic and a language the concerned worker understands.

In line with its commitment to the principles of international justice, enshrined in the UN Charter and other relevant international norms, as well as its engagement/determination to combat terrorism, my government, continues to follow the work of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon in seeking to unveil the truth, relieve the families of the victims and put an end to impunity.

To conclude Mr. Chairman, we would like to express our appreciation and support to the constructive work of the Rule of Law Coordination and Resource Group in the activities it carries out for the advancement of this concept that undeniably consolidates the three main UN Pillars, namely human rights, peace and security, and development.

Thank you.