

REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

SEVENTY-SECOND REGULAR SESSION

SIXTH COMMITTEE

AGENDA ITEM: 84

STATEMENT

by

Ms. Sandra Pejic

Counsellor

Permanent Mission of the Republic of Serbia

to the United Nations

New York, 5 October 2017

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I wish to congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau on your election. You can count on Serbia's support and cooperation throughout the work of the Committee.

We thank the Secretary-General for his reports (A/72/268) "Strengthening and coordinating UN rule of law activities" and (A/72/86) "Review of the regulations to give effect to Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations". We also thank the Deputy Secretary-General for introducing the reports.

Mr. Chairman,

The rule of law is of paramount importance for preventing conflict and achieving sustainable peace. It is, therefore, incumbent upon all the Member States of our Organization to uphold and abide by the rule of law at national and international levels. The rule of law at the national level is the key prerequisite for political stability, without which there is no economic growth or social development. For, as we all know, it is only by ensuring political stability that we create a proper business environment and attract investment.

At the international level, justice and the rule of law are the preconditions for the maintenance of peace and security. Therefore, my country is firmly committed to an international order that is based on the rule of law and international law and is the cornerstone of peaceful coexistence and cooperation among States. At the same time, the rule of law is at the core of the principles and activities of the United Nations; it plays the crucial role in the promotion and protection of human rights; and, as has been said time and again, the rule of law is a *sine qua non* in our pursuit of the SDGs and the realization of the 2030 Agenda.

Mr. Chairman,

Serbia participated in the establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC) some years ago now and has remained firmly committed to this institution ever since. The ICC was

established to prosecute and punish the perpetrators of the most serious international crimes. We, therefore, strongly support the further strengthening of the ICC institutional capacity and activities and expect all States and international organizations to cooperate with the ICC fully and unconditionally. The Rome Statute's acceptance should be universal.

Impunity, Mr. Chairman, must not be allowed to stand and the commitment of the Member States of our Organization to fighting the most serious international crimes must be unequivocal and on a continuous basis. In this context, let me point out the commitment of my country to another international judicial institution: the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY). Over the years, Serbia has cooperated with the ICTY extensively and on all acts that the Security Council recognized in the ICTY Statute as serious international crimes without exception; it aligned its criminal legislation with relevant standards; and tried war crimes effectively in its own courts.

We commend the Secretary-General for his leadership in advancing the issue of the rule of law. Also, Serbia supports the activities of the United Nations in promoting the rule of law and the work of the Rule of Law Coordination and Resource Group. These efforts should be based on the fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter, i.e. on the respect of national sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in internal affairs.

In conclusion, let me reiterate my country's commitment to the strengthening of the rule of law. The rule of law is the basis for ensuring legal security, both for individuals and for entire societies. And, after all, the rule of law is one of the basic preconditions of economic growth, social development and the political stability of all States, big and small.

Thank you.