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**Statement by Mr. George Mikeladze
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The rule of law at the national and international levels
Sixth Committee, 74rd Session of the UNGA
New York, 14 October 2019**

Mr. Chair,

Georgia aligns itself with the statement of the European Union delivered under the agenda item. Let me add the following remarks in my national capacity.

Mr. Chairman,

We thank Secretary-General for his report on “Strengthening and Coordinating UN rule of law activities” (A/74/139) and welcome United Nations efforts to promote the rule of law globally.

We share the understanding behind the SDG 16 that progress on peace and development depends on the creation of inclusive societies where the rule of law and human rights are respected. We also believe that target 16.3 on rule of law and access to justice has critical importance in this regard. Therefore, Georgia remains an active member of different global initiatives¹ aimed at supporting successful implementation of the SDG 16 globally and thus promoting the democratic values and supremacy of law.

Over the past several years, Georgia has continued its efforts aimed at ensuring human rights protection, rule of law and good governance. Government’s recent activities with regard to the strengthening of the rule of law include and are not limited to the enhancement of institutional independence of the prosecution agencies, creation of the Office of the Personal Data Protection Inspector, implementation of comprehensive legal and structural reforms in the penitentiary system. Establishment of the Human Rights Protection Department at the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia was aimed at ensuring timely response and effective investigation into the following crimes: domestic violence; violence against women (including sexual violence); crimes committed on the grounds of discrimination; hate crimes; trafficking and crimes committed by and/or towards minors.

The Government of Georgia has also maintained transparency and openness of its work, ensuring free access to information and setting high standards in the field of Open Governance.

¹ Like “16+ Forum”, “Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies”, Open Government Partnership (OGP).

Mr. Chairman,

Georgia is a strong supporter of the promotion of and respect for international law and rules-based international order and remains committed to the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

Georgia recognizes the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice in accordance with Article 36 of the Statute of the Court and reaffirms its support to primacy of peaceful settlement of disputes.

Two decades after the adoption of the Rome Statute, we remain committed to strengthening the International Criminal Court as a legal institution, inter alia, by contributing to enforcement of international criminal justice.

In January 2019, the Government of Georgia and the ICC concluded an Agreement on the Enforcement of Sentences. Under the agreement, persons convicted by the ICC may serve their sentence of imprisonment in Georgia if so decided by the Court and accepted by the Government of Georgia. In our view, cooperation with the Court, through complementarity principle, remains an indispensable element for the effective and efficient Court

Against this background, while the ICC investigation into crimes committed in Georgia during the Russian aggression in 2008 represents first ever case of court entering Europe's legal geography, it certainly serves as a litmus test for the Court's efforts in coping with the challenges of upholding the values of the Rome Statute.

GoG stands ready to continue work with the ICC in ensuring that, after more than a decade, alleged crimes are effectively investigated and justice is served.

For the victims of these heinous crimes deserve no less,

Georgia strongly believes in the principles of international justice and rule of law, which are the pillars of sustainable peace. When impunity reigns neither justice, nor peace can be achieved.

Against this background, we welcome the progress achieved in vital work of International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism for Syria (IIIM) and strongly support inclusion of funding of the Mechanism in the regular budget of the United Nations.

The protection of human rights and respect for rule of law requires a strong legal framework and highly functioning institutions that hold both, individuals and the government accountable for their actions.

I thank you.