



**PERMANENT MISSION OF SINGAPORE  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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**STATEMENT BY MR NATHANIEL KHNG,  
COUNSELLOR (LEGAL), PERMANENT MISSION OF SINGAPORE  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 85,  
ON THE RULE OF LAW AT THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL  
LEVELS, SIXTH COMMITTEE,  
8 OCTOBER 2021**

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Mdm Chair,

1 My delegation thanks Assistant-Secretary-General Volker Türk for introducing the Secretary-General's report on this agenda item.

2 At the outset, I would like to reaffirm Singapore's unwavering support for the rule of law at the national and international levels. We believe that the rule of law is fundamental for the maintenance of international peace and security, and the achievement of sustainable development. The ongoing pandemic has had a negative impact on the rule of law. But there have also been some encouraging developments that I want to briefly highlight.

3 First, my delegation welcomes the fact that work to codify and develop international instruments, norms, standards and rules has carried on despite the challenges posed by the pandemic. We were pleased that the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law had a productive 54<sup>th</sup> session and was able to adopt several legislative texts, and that the BBNJ intergovernmental conference undertook intersessional work. Singapore will continue to contribute constructively to these efforts, which we believe are integral to the strengthening of the rule of law.

4 Second, the pandemic has been the catalyst for justice systems around the world, including Singapore, to develop new and improved ways to undertake legal tasks and processes. My delegation encourages the sharing of experiences and best practices in addressing pandemic-related challenges, particularly where these have served to enhance access to justice, as well as efficiency and transparency. In Singapore, one of the measures we adopted during the pandemic was to enact legislation that enabled the wider use of remote communication technology (such as video-link) in court proceedings. This has helped to maintain

access to justice, while safeguarding the health and safety of officials and users of the court.

5 Third, even with the diversion of time and resources to tackling the pandemic, capacity-building activities in support of the rule of law are still being undertaken. In this regard, we welcome the United Nations’ continued support of Member States’ requests for capacity-building, technical assistance and strategic reforms to institutions. Singapore has also maintained our assistance to fellow developing countries through, for example, the Singapore Cooperation Programme, which has continued delivering courses relating to law and governance on a virtual platform.

Mdm Chair,

6 Next year marks the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption and opening for signature of one of the great contributions of the United Nations to the rule of law in the governance of the global commons, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. This will be an opportunity to reflect on what the United Nations and multilateralism can achieve in promoting the rule of law in other areas of the global commons, such as the digital commons.

7 Thank you very much for your attention.

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