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**United States Statement at the 76th General Assembly Sixth Committee
Agenda Item 85: Debate on the Rule of Law at the National and International Levels
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Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report on this agenda item.

We would also like to thank the Rule of Law Coordination and Resource Group and the Rule of Law Unit. The individuals who perform this work often do so under very difficult circumstances – and over the past 19 months, they have been called upon to do so amidst a global pandemic. We are deeply grateful for their efforts.

The Secretary-General's report identifies a number of global trends.

Among the most concerning is the trend toward the politicization of justice institutions and threats to their independence. This is deeply unsettling. In every country, judicial institutions must be allowed to perform their work free from any form of interference. They must be allowed to apply applicable domestic legal frameworks, even when the decisions of a government are at issue. And they must be allowed to conduct their work without fear of reprisal.

Equally worrying is the Secretary General's reporting on attacks against UN personnel serving in peacekeeping operations and special political missions. These personnel operate in challenging and perilous environments. The United States condemns in the strongest terms all acts of violence against United Nations personnel, which may constitute war crimes. And we pay tribute to all personnel who have lost their lives serving with the United Nations.

Having spoken mostly about concerning trends, let me also acknowledge some bright spots. We welcome the UN's e-justice project in Bangladesh, through which it has trained over 1,000 justice actors. Similarly, the UN has analyzed millions of criminal and civil cases in Kazakhstan to generate a mapping system to improve case management. And in Pakistan, it has supported gender-sensitive infrastructure to improve the representation of women in the police force.

With respect to the work before us in the coming weeks, we hope that the Sixth Committee will be able to reach a consensus on a subtopic for next year. We think that the past practice of selecting subtopics can lead to more focused and productive debates on the rule of law in this forum.

Finally, let me say that when we gather here in the Sixth Committee, we do so on the basis of an understanding. That at its best, legal discourse is a substitute for more dangerous ways to approach problems.

In our view, that same understanding is fundamental to preserving the rule of law. If the rule of law is protected, then the rules-based international legal order is also protected, and we are better able to address the global challenges before us.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.