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Sixth Committee

“the Rule of Law at the National and International levels”

**Statement by Liselot Egmond
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NEW YORK, 8 October 2021

Madam/Mr. Chair,

The Kingdom of the Netherlands would like to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report.

We align ourselves with the statement given by European Union and I would like to make three additional remarks.

1. [Strengthening the Rule of Law at the National Level]

First, as the Secretary-General's report sets out so clearly, the UN assistance to the promotion of the rule of law is essential to realizing the Sustainable Development Goals. The Netherlands is convinced that building peaceful and inclusive societies requires a people-centered rule of law and access to justice. SDG16 is an important accelerator of much needed progress across the entire 2030 agenda. It contributes to the eradication of poverty, achievement of gender equality and decent work to name but a few. Providing access to justice for all is particularly acute in response to the COVID-19 pandemic that has exacerbated inequalities and disproportionately affected persons in vulnerable situations.

The Secretary-General's vision for a more inclusive, effective and networked multilateral world, presented in "Our Common Agenda", places systems and institutions that deliver for people at the heart of global efforts to regain public trust. This trust is fundamental to reimagining the social contract. Ensuring rule of law and justice systems that are responsive to people's needs should therefore remain an important priority for the UN.

The Netherlands encourages the Secretary-General to take this forward in developing a new vision for the rule of law. A vision that recognises that development, peace and stability depend on justice systems that put people and their justice needs at the centre. Systems that help resolve justice problems by working with a broad variety of formal and informal justice actors and making better use of data and innovation. And last but not least, systems that use access to justice as a tool for reconciliation and prevention. Because in the end, building trustworthy and legitimate justice systems underpin resilient societies.

[Strengthening the rule of law at the international level]

Secondly, Chair, as the United Nations Charter states, one of the main tenets of the United Nations is to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. To this end, it is imperative that all states adhere to the peaceful settlement of their differences. The Netherlands has accepted the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice and the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, and calls on all States to do the same. We also urge all states to continue their political, financial and logistical support to the International Criminal Court and invite those states who have not done so, to accede to the Rome Statute.

[Rule of law at the United Nations]

Third, the rule of law applies in an equal manner not only to all states. It also applies to international organizations, including the United Nations, its Funds and its Programs. While the United Nations' support to states in their efforts to ensure people-centered access to justice is essential in many different ways, it is imperative that the Organization itself leads by example.

In this regard, we welcome that the Secretary-General's report contains information on strengthening the Administration of Justice within the Organization. In the next report, we would welcome information on the implementation by the Organization of decisions taken by its judicial institutions. We will also repeat this request in connection with the agenda item on the Administration of Justice.

In addition, in the next report we would welcome information on established procedures, open to third parties filing a complaint or request for indemnification for damages caused to them by the Organization and – more specifically – on the implementation of resolution A/RES/52/247 on third party liability. This seems particularly acute in respect of the Organization's operational activities such as in the field of peacekeeping missions.

Finally, we would welcome inviting the International Law Commission to move the topic "The settlement of international disputes to which international organizations are parties" from the long-term programme of work to its programme of work. These steps would help to strengthen the Organization's own credibility in this crucial area.

Thank you Chair