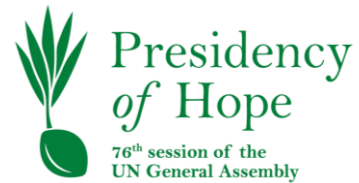


**REMARKS OF H.E. MR. ABDULLA SHAHID  
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
Address to Sixth Committee  
15 October 2021**

Her Excellency, Alya Ahmed Saif al-Thani, Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar and Chair of the Sixth Committee,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

To begin, I warmly congratulate Ambassador Sheikha Alya Ahmed Saif al-Thani, as well as all Bureau Members, on your elections to the Sixth Committee.

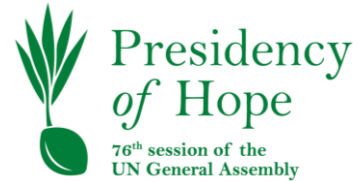
The Sixth Committee is an indispensable part of this great organization. Since its inception, the United Nations has made respect for international law one of its key mandates.



This is enshrined in the Charter itself, which sets forth in its preamble the objective - to “establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained”.

In that same spirit, last year, on the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations, the General Assembly adopted a commitment to “abide by international law and ensure justice” as one of its key messages.

I applaud the work that the Sixth Committee has done over the years to carry these objectives forward. Whether upholding justice and international law, introducing measures to eliminate international terrorism, or revitalizing the work of the General Assembly, the Sixth Committee has faithfully discharged its mandate under Article 13 (1) of the Charter of the United Nations.



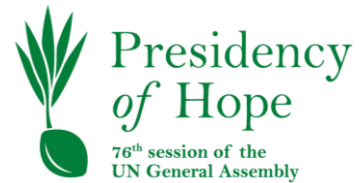
Distinguished delegates,

I need not remind everyone that we are emerging from a global pandemic that has devastated lives and livelihoods, decimated economies, and led to friction around the world.

As I have conveyed to the other Main Committees, the eyes of the world are on the UN, especially under these extraordinary circumstances.

This is the year that we must act; that we must demonstrate our ability to respond to needs, to reignite a sense of hope, optimism, and purpose in our world.

Against this backdrop, please allow me to make two short recommendations for consideration:

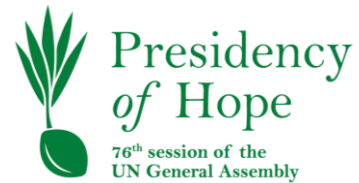


First, I encourage the Committee to continue to conduct its business through dialogue and consensus, highlighting the primacy of the rule of law.

Adhering to these values and principles is especially important considering the pivotal role that this Committee plays in promoting the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with Articles 2 (3) and 33 of the UN Charter.

Second, I must emphasize that the repercussions of global warming and sea level rise are not limited to their immediate climate-impacts, they extend to a number of spheres, including the legal sphere.

As a Maldivian, I look forward to Committee-level discussions on the report of the International Law Commission and the topic of “Sea-level rise in relation to international law”.



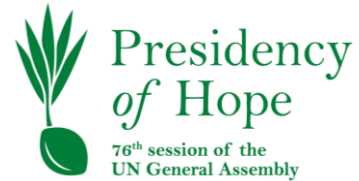
In that regard let us seriously consider the potential implications sea level rise can have for small island states, with reference to international law.

Distinguished delegates,

Allow me to acknowledge the gender balance in the Sixth Committee bureau this year, including in its leadership.

Going forward, I hope to see similar, better representation of women in international institutions, including commissions, courts, and tribunals.

On 12 November 2021, the UN General Assembly will elect members of the International Law Commission. We hope to see more countries putting forward women candidates. This is particularly important given that only 3% of the Commission's 229 members have been women. Clearly, we must do better.

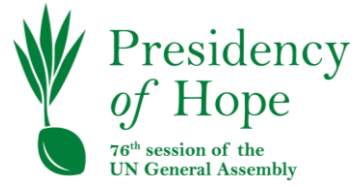


The Sixth Committee remains essential in our efforts to advance multilateralism and strengthen a rules-based international order. I applaud you for continuing to engage in this important work, even in the midst of the pandemic.

Be assured, that during my Presidency of Hope, I will fully support your endeavors to strengthen and maintain respect for international law, and your commitments to always uphold the primacy of the rule of law.

Through strengthening international legal regimes and instruments we can steer the world on a better path, in which we will maintain peace and security, ensure economic prosperity, protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, and build back better from the pandemic.

I wish you every success throughout the 76th Session.



I thank you.

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