

Draft Statement delivered by Solomon Islands  
At the Sixth Committee on Agenda Item 88: ‘Strengthening and promoting the international  
treaty framework’  
October 15, 2021 (Delivered by Noel Matea – Deputy Permanent Representative)

Thank you Madame Chair,

As this is the first time that my delegation is taking the floor in the Sixth Committee this session, I extend to you and the Bureau our congratulations on your selection and assure you of my delegation’s support for the discharge of your work.

Madame Chair, Solomon Islands supports the development of an online registration tool to facilitate the submission of treaties and international agreements for registration. Solomon Islands would like to note the geographical imbalance in treaty registration. An online registration tool could help remedy this imbalance by simplifying the registration and publication process. However, Small Island Developing States, such as Solomon Islands, continue to experience information and communication technology challenges. Consequently, should the treaty registration process transition to a fully online platform, the United Nations Secretariat should look to opportunities for capacity-building and technology sharing in order to address these regional disparities and mitigate such technological challenges.

Likewise, Solomon Islands welcomes a discussion on the adaptation of the United Nations Treaty Series into a digital format publication, while recognizing the technological challenges developing States face.

Additionally, Solomon Islands supports the individualized publication of treaties suggested by Spain and France in order to bolster the efficiency and transparency of the treaty publication process. As noted by many States and reflected in the Secretary General’s Report, the packaging of treaties into volumes needlessly delays treaty publication. Currently, the materials for all treaties within the volume must be compiled and translated into English and French prior to publication, with each volume comprised of approximately 25-30 treaties on average. Solomon Islands thus supports the recommendation noted in the Secretary General’s Report to immediately publish treaties online once the treaty and its materials are ready for publication.

Finally, Solomon Islands supports the oral statement delivered by the Federated States of Micronesia and the written comments provided by Austria during the 75<sup>th</sup> session, regarding the use of this agenda item as a forum to discuss further issues beyond the registration of treaties and international agreements, so long as those issues are related to international treaties and treaty law. Strengthening the international treaty framework requires the recognition of any changing circumstances that may impact the integrity of treaties and international agreements registered with the Secretariat. To that end, Solomon Islands expresses its view that once maritime zones are delineated in accordance with UNCLOS and deposited with the Secretariat, these maritime zones are fixed despite sea-level rise. Treaties identifying maritime baselines may only be updated by formal amendment by the Parties to the treaty, even if their coastal features are impacted by anthropogenic climate change and sea-level rise. As the UN Convention on the Law

of the Sea (UNCLOS) does not adequately consider rapidly rising sea levels, subsequent State practice, made in the context of climate change and in furtherance of preserving maritime entitlements, should inform the interpretation of UNCLOS in accordance with the Vienna Convention.

Madame Chair, in conclusion, Solomon Islands urges all delegations to continue to engage in dialogue on this agenda item. We look forward to working together in the Sixth Committee to support efforts to ensure that the UN framework effectively facilitates technology to promote universal access and participation, while also responding to the technical challenges of developing States.

I thank you.