



ESPAÑA

STATEMENT

BY THE LEGAL ADVISER AND FIRST SECRETARY WITHIN THE
PERMANENT MISSION OF SPAIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. Ricardo García López

AT THE SIXTH COMMITTEE
OF THE 76th SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Agenda item 88: Strengthening and promoting the international treaty framework

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(Unofficial translation. Check against delivery)

Thank you very much, **Madam/Mr. Chair**,

Allow me to begin my intervention with renewed thanks, both to the States proposing in 2018 this item in the work program of our Commission; and to the Secretary General, especially within his Secretariat to the Treaty Section, for having provided very relevant information for the improvement of one of the most outstanding activities of our organization: the registration and publication of international agreements under Article 102 of the Charter.

Madam/Mr. Chair, Spain wishes that, the topic of this session, a very concrete result is achieved: to complete the updating and improvement of the Rules of Procedure that makes possible the operation of registration and publication of treaties, thus closing the work initiated in 2018 through the partial update of the Rules of Procedure by Resolution 73/210.

Since then, my country has devoted its attention to the specific examination of one of the so-called "outstanding issues" of that update: the excess of time that elapses between the submission of a treaty by States for registration, and the time of its formal publication in the United Nations Treaty Collection. To a large extent, according to the information provided by the Secretariat itself, the time that elapses is linked to the necessary translation work, where necessary, into English and French, prior to publication in accordance with Article 12 of the Rules of Procedure.

Thus, Spain has sought, as was made clear last year, to concentrate its proposals to the Regulations on tools to improve the policy of translation of treaties in the area of registration and publication.

With this in mind, Spain has joined Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Equatorial Guinea, Honduras, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Uruguay and Venezuela and has submitted specific proposals to Articles 5 and 13 of the Rules of Procedure, based on two key elements: the multilingualism of our Organization, embodied in the wealth of its six official languages; and the use of information and communication technologies.

Madam/Mr. Chair, these proposals, which are based on dialogue with various units of the Secretariat, as well as on consultations with a large number of delegations belonging to different regional groups, take up the principles that were formulated by my country last year to propose improvements to the Rules of Procedure:

First, the introduction in Article 5 of the Rules of Procedure of the possibility for Member States that wish, completely voluntarily and without any obligatory character, to submit their treaties for registration and publication accompanied by one or more courtesy translations into any of the six official languages of the United Nations. This is in order to expedite the translation into English and French prior to publication in accordance with the provisions of Article 12 of the Rules of Procedure, whose regime of languages of translation for publication remains unchanged.

This possibility offers an additional tool at zero cost to the Secretariat to expedite the translation of international agreements into English and French for publication, and at the same time, it does not overly burden States submitting treaties for registration, since it is voluntary and offers the broad range of the six official languages to facilitate the submission of courtesy

translations. Spain also considers that these translations have a special added value in cases where treaties are concluded in languages other than one of the six official languages, particularly in the initial registration of these instruments by the Secretariat.

This General Assembly has already stated that it recommends the use of courtesy translations to expedite the process of registration and publication of treaties and international agreements. What better formula, then, than to call upon the six official languages in the Rules of Procedure themselves to assist in this task. Because Spain considers, together with the delegations already mentioned, that Arabic, Chinese, Russian and Spanish should also be called upon to make it possible for international treaties and agreements to be accessible in their content and published as soon as possible.

The proposal of Spain and the above-mentioned group of countries is an addition to the content of the current Rule 5 of the Rules of Procedure, which makes multilingualism applied to courtesy translations a tool to help achieve an objective of the organization, without any increase in costs, with potential savings in time and money. My delegation modestly believes that this formula for improving the rules of procedure should not encounter great difficulty in succeeding.

Madam/Mr. Chair, secondly, Spain wishes to recognize and reflect in the regulations the Secretariat's very positive practice of sequentially and immediately "making available online" both the authentic versions and the translations into English and French at the very moment that each one of them is available. For this reason, Spain is promoting, together with the countries mentioned above, a proposal to, if I may say so, "codify" the practice of making available online in a new wording of Article 13 of the regulation.

This practice is also particularly beneficial in those cases where the treaties that are made available online are concluded in one of the six official languages, because by making available online the authentic versions in the official languages, plus the translations into the languages of publication when available, the treaty in question enjoy a very satisfactory level of early accessibility.

Madam/Mr. Chair,

By way of conclusion, allow me to reiterate that Spain has focused its thinking on this issue on suggesting ways to improve the current wording of the Rules of Procedure, focusing on functionality, seeking above all to increase accessibility to the content of treaties and international agreements in a timely manner, making use of the time-honored principle of multilingualism. This kinds of efforts, promoted by this Sixth Committee, will bring us closer to full compliance with the provisions of Article 102 of the Charter.

Thank you very much, **Madam/Mr. Chair**.