



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
SIERRA LEONE TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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**STATEMENT**

BY

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AT THE 77<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
(SIXTH COMMITTEE)

AGENDA ITEM 124:  
**“REVITALIZATION OF THE WORK OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY”**

NEW YORK, 10<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2022

*CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY*

**Chair,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,**

1. The Delegation of Sierra Leone notes the importance of the debate on this agenda item on the “Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly” and in this regard, the Sixth Committee.
2. My delegation associates with the Statement delivered by the Distinguished Representative of **El Salvador** on behalf of a Group of States, including **Sierra Leone**.
3. In recent years, the Sixth Committee has agreed to changes in its method of work, including the introduction of time limits in its plenary debates, save for the debate on the report of the International Law Commission, to enhance greater efficiency in its work.
4. However, given the mandate of the Sixth Committee, which is to make recommendations to the plenary of the United Nations General Assembly for the purpose of promoting the “progressive development of international law and its codification” as set out in article 13 (1) (a) of the United Nations Charter; and also to address legal questions of pressing concern to the international community, my delegation has expressed disquiet over issues or creeping practices that may undermine legitimacy in the Sixth Committee’s international law-making process, through growing inconsistency in our method of work, challenges to pluralism which this Committee and the United Nations offer, and inertia owing to lack of good

faith, that may lead to the absolute “misuse and abuse” of the consensus practice of the Committee if not addressed.

5. The delegation of Sierra Leone, noting the importance of the role of international law in maintaining the rules-based multilateral system, deems it as appropriate for the Committee to examine its working methods to safeguard the rules-based system, prevent a regress in the international order from rules-based to power-based, and enhance the role of the United Nations in this regard. Irrespective of the imperfections that may exist, the international legal order has provided important safeguards and further provided a more equitable landscape and level-playing field in international law norm setting.

**Chair,**

6. The delegation of Sierra Leone has observed that the recent challenges in the Sixth Committee including inconsistency in approach and inertia have been most manifest in considering the products and recommendations of the International Law Commission (“ILC” or “Commission”). In the debate on the agenda item 80, (“Consideration of prevention of transboundary harm from hazardous activities and allocation of loss in the case of such harm”), my delegation offered views on how to improve our method of work on dealing with ILC products.
7. My delegation made the point that irrespective of the various positions of member States on the various products of the ILC, it is our view that there is common interest for the Sixth Committee, at

this point, to take stock of such agenda items, and further rationalize these topics with the view to sequencing meaningful debate on them, and to act on the recommendations of the Commission as appropriate.

8. We also expressed the view that there is a need to examine the utility of the frequency of meetings on topics, to ensure adequate opportunity to engage on the substance of the products with the passage of time, particularly when the elaboration of a convention is recommended. The delegation of Sierra Leone is not advocating for a “one size fit all approach”, but rather is urging for consistency, and by extension legitimacy in the work of the Sixth Committee.
9. As we have said previously, this approach can only complement the ILC’s examination of its own working methods, following the re-establishment of the Working Group on methods of work of the Commission, the receipt of working papers on, inter alia, *“the relationship with other bodies, including the Sixth Committee...; and nomenclature relating to the outcomes of the Commission’s work”*. Similar to the view expressed by the Group of States, the Sixth Committee can best mirror the approach of examining our method of work to address the present challenges.

**Chair,**

10. At the heart of the revitalization agenda item is the “Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations”, which includes our Sixth Committee. And since by resolution 58/316 the Sixth Committee can consider and take

action on its tentative programme of work, there exist a further opportunity for it to improve its processes, and also find a useful balance in the allocation of conference resources and time.

11. My delegation has observed that overtime, the Sixth Committee is constrained to accommodate its in-depth and necessary deliberations in the plenary meetings, the meeting of its working groups and informal consultations on draft resolutions.
12. To ensure delegations have sufficient time to engage in informal consultations, and since the Sixth Committee benefits from the early election of its Bureau, there is value in considering early identification and appointment of facilitators/coordinators, to allow for equally early signaling of approaches to a topic, calls for proposals and “informal informal” engagements to maximize conference time and resources that may be made available in the main part of the session.
13. Let me close, **Chair**, by underlining that despite the existing challenges, the Committee has largely undertaken the work assigned to it and set to conclude its work in the main part of the session with significant substantive progress on important topics.
14. This is in part thanks to the realization by delegations to not just accept “the easy but futile technical rollover” default approach followed in the immediate past two sessions affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, but also and significantly, delegations have been

encouraged by your excellent leadership, Chair, with the call to make progress on our work, as supported by your Bureau. My delegation therefore expresses its deep gratitude to you and your Bureau for your commendable work.

15. We thank the Secretariat for providing the needed services to the Committee, the institutional memory and guidance wherever requested by member States.

16. In thanking Colleagues for the constructive engagement, and collaborative spirit demonstrated this session, we can only urge for sustained efforts to consolidate the advances gained in the various resolutions and to explore possible steps to improve our method of work.

I thank you.