

Address to the Sixth Committee

Remarks by H.E. Mr. Csaba Kőrösi, President of the 77th session of the United Nations General Assembly

13 October, 2022, 11.00 a.m.

Ambassador Afonso, Chair of the Sixth Committee,
Distinguished Delegates,

Let me offer to your attention a quote from Dame Hilary Mantel, the British author who died just three weeks ago:

“When you are writing laws you are testing words to find their utmost power. Like spells, they have to make things happen in the real world, and like spells, they only work if people believe in them.”

She was right: creating laws and interpreting them is a unique endeavor that comes with great responsibility.

In his report “Our Common Agenda”, the Secretary-General called upon States to abide by international law and ensure justice.

Indeed, law and justice are essential dimensions of the social contract, especially in our turbulent and uncertain times.

It is lawlessness, the absence of law, that lies at the heart of fragile and conflict-prone societies.

It is lawlessness, the absence of law, that brings the scourge of war on nations.

The work of the Sixth Committee must not be merely an academic exercise.

International law must provide answers, assurances, order and justice in the face of almost continuous political turmoil, natural disasters and health crises.

Your agenda for this session is packed.

From the elimination of international terrorism to the prevention of transboundary harm and managing transboundary aquifers - the Sixth Committee will cover some of the most complex and interlinked crises we face.

As you perform your work, I encourage you to always evaluate your contributions through the lenses of crisis management and transformation.

Use law as a force of good, of sustainable development, of justice and of positive change.

Continue to conduct the business of the Sixth Committee through dialogue, in a manner that highlights the primacy of the rule of law.

All of you must work together, with solidarity in mind, to find sustainable solutions.

Do not forget the words of another writer, Robert Louis Stevenson, who said that "Compromise is the best and cheapest lawyer."

Dear Colleagues,

As your delegations have reconfirmed it yesterday, after a two-days long debate in the GA, the purposes and principles underlying the Charter of the United Nations and international law remain solid and universal.

They are an indispensable foundation for fostering peace and security, economic prosperity, and the full respect of human rights for all nations.

I reaffirm my pledge to defend the Charter and its values.

Before concluding, I want to give my heartfelt congratulations to Ambassador Afonso, as well as all the Bureau members, on your election to the Sixth Committee.

Please be assured that you have my full support and that of my office.

I also want to commend the continued maintenance of gender parity in the Bureau of the Sixth Committee.

My hope is that you, Member States, will bring the gender representation that I see here today to the international courts and tribunals and the International Law Commission, too.

I wish you all the best in your crucial endeavors.

Thank you.