



## UNITED STATES MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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### **Remarks at a Meeting of the Sixth Committee on Agenda Item 83: The Rule of Law at the National and International levels**

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October 16, 2023**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States appreciates the Secretary-General's report on strengthening and coordinating United Nations rule of law activities. We would also like to thank the Rule of Law Coordination and Resource Group as well as the Rule of Law Unit. The individuals who perform this work often do so under very difficult circumstances and we are deeply grateful for their efforts.

We are pleased to see the excellent work of the UN in promoting the rule of law at the national level. For example, we appreciate the UN's continued advocacy in Afghanistan to clarify the legal framework, allow the return to work of former judges and other justice personnel, especially women, and reinstate accountability within rule of law institutions. We also value the UN's efforts around the world aimed at enhancing access to justice for all in a manner that is "non-discriminatory, user-friendly, fair, and tailored to diverse people's needs." We also take this opportunity to recognize the UN's efforts to increase accountability for serious crimes under international law and to strengthen criminal accountability, including the laudable achievements of the Special Criminal Court in the Central African Republic.

As Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield has said, the rule of law "is an ironclad commitment for the United States and a fundamental principle of the United Nations". The responsibilities of the UN and Member States are to protect and enhance the rule of law in their respective jurisdictions, and to support other States and civil society organizations seeking to do the same. The United States believes that the rule of law is a critical factor in the advancement of democracy and human rights, and is a precondition for access to justice, especially for underrepresented populations. As such, the United States makes great effort to maintain and protect the rule of law in our own country as well as to support rule of law initiatives across the globe.

With respect to this year's subtopic of "using technology to advance access to justice for all", the United States continues to promote broad and creative thinking with our partners, civil society, investigative bodies as well as the tech sector to advance access to justice.

In April of this year, the United States Agency for International Development – USAID – released its updated Rule of Law Policy with a vision of “a renewed commitment to justice, rights, and security for all.” This policy outlines a people-centered justice approach for the support of rule of law as a critical component of USAID’s humanitarian and development mission. This approach aims to be holistic, seeking to improve the systems that support and manage the administration of justice, enhance the services that define and comprise how people, in all their diversity, encounter the delivery of justice, and meet the needs, demands, and ideas of societies. By supporting locally driven innovations and digital solutions to help rule of law institutions and justice providers better serve their communities, we hope this blueprint will increase the appropriate use of technology to improve access to justice, equity, and inclusion, and result in better justice outcomes for all.

The United States has also looked to leverage technological solutions as part of our commitment to supporting justice and accountability for international crimes. For example, the United States Department of State has established the Conflict Observatory program, which is making important contributions to Ukrainian and international accountability efforts by using innovative technology to document and analyze evidence of human rights abuses and atrocities committed in Ukraine.

The United States also takes note of the UN’s efforts to utilize technology as part of its program to advance justice, particularly the development of the eCourt mobile application “aimed at speeding up and optimizing judicial process while enabling access to court services via smartphones”.

As President Biden said in the General Assembly Hall a few weeks ago, the United States will continue our efforts to preserve “openness, transparency, and the rule of law...”. The rule of law is a core American value, a foundation for democracy and good governance, and a pillar of the UN’s important work.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.