



**Statement on Item 83 – The Rule of Law at the National and International levels
Sixth Committee, 78th Session of the UNGA
New York, 17 October 2023**

Mr. Chair,

Georgia aligned itself with a statement delivered by the European Union and I would like to make the following remarks in my national capacity.

We appreciate the SG’s recent report on ‘Strengthening and coordinating United Nations rule of law activities’ (A/78/184), which amongst others disseminates the ‘new vision of the Secretary-General for the rule of law’. We welcome the UN’s collective efforts towards upholding the rule of law.

Regrettably, as documented in the report, the rule of law, democracy and women’s rights have deteriorated within the reporting period in several vulnerable settings. We concur with the SG that upholding the rule of law is significant to address today’s complex crises and to ‘build peaceful societies with equal opportunities and with full respect for the rights and freedoms of all’.

Distinguished colleagues,

Halfway to 2030, the SDG 16 still remains key for the overall success of the 2030 Agenda as without Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions the world will not be able to achieve any of the SDGs. In this vein, Georgia stays further committed to revitalize progress towards the SDG 16, including its target 16.3 on the rule of law and access to justice for all.

The rapid advancement of digital technologies continues to transform all aspects of our everyday lives. As duly noted in the SG’s report, digital technologies ‘provide new means for people to seek and obtain remedies through formal or informal justice institutions’.

With this in mind, Georgia strives to further strengthen the government digital development. The National Digital Governance Strategy of Georgia, which is expected to be adopted later this year, envisions initiatives to harness the benefits of open data by identifying high-value datasets and implementation of other open data practices at the national level.

Mr. Chair,

Protection of the fundamental rights of the persons deprived of their liberty in line with the highest European and International Standards remains the key priority for Georgian penitentiary system. Since 2018, Penitentiary and Crime Prevention Systems reform have aimed at ensuring well-functioning and transparent systems. The Strategy for 2023-2026, prepared by the Special Penitentiary Service will further strengthen the abovementioned efforts. In addition, let me turn to the recently adopted New Penitentiary Code of Georgia, which combines more positive amendments in particular, new regulations on the status and management of the Special Penitentiary Service.

Moreover, we are pleased to note that to harness the benefits of advanced technologies and further increase access and quality of higher education within Prison Education Service, Special Penitentiary Service has recently introduced Digital University in Georgian penitentiary system, enabling convicts to get high-quality higher education via distance learning. Furthermore, the digital method of dactyloscopy has been implemented across all Penitentiary Institutions which enables data digitalization for the Remands/Convicts.

Distinguished colleagues,

It goes without saying that the participation in ensuring accountability can contribute towards upholding the rule of law. In this vein, Georgia as a founding member of the International Criminal Court and one of its exemplary supporters, reiterates its readiness to continue our close cooperation with the ICC in order to ensure that justice will be served for the victims of the most serious crimes of international concern in Georgia and elsewhere.

Having said that, let me recall the judgements of the ECHR and the decision of the ICC, which confirmed the occupation and effective control of the Russian Federation over Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions of Georgia and Russia's full responsibility for grave violations on the ground.

Mr. Chair,

In conclusion, let me underline that Georgia further stays closely engaged in a collaborative effort towards enhancing the rule of law and access to justice for all.

I thank you!