



Statement

on behalf of the Republic of South Africa

by

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**before the Sixth Committee of the 78th Session of the
United Nations General Assembly**

Under Agenda item No 87

**“Strengthening and Promoting the International
Treaty Framework”**

New York, 19 October 2023

Chairperson,

South Africa, welcomes with great appreciation the inclusion of this important item entitled “Strengthening and promoting the international treaty framework” on the agenda of the seventy-eighth session of the General Assembly, and in particular, for inviting Member States to prepare and submit their comments during the debate on the subtopic “Best practices of depositaries of multilateral treaties”.

Accordingly, this statement is delivered pursuant to the General Assembly resolution 76/120 adopted on 09 December 2021.

Chairperson,

South Africa further welcomes the amendment to the regulations giving effect to Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations, which came into effect on 01 February 2022 and has helped to simplify the role of depositaries other than the Secretary-General of the United Nations. As a depositary of a multilateral treaty, South Africa would like to express with appreciation the recognition of the efforts and significant role played by depositaries in the registration and to a certain extent the publication of treaties.

Although in the regulations depositaries are encouraged to register treaties, we consider it necessary and support the views that the registration of treaties by the depositaries should also be obligated in line with Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations, 1945 read together with Article 77(g) of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, 1969 which details the functions of the depositaries of treaties.

Chairperson,

South Africa acknowledges the great efforts by the Secretary-General to develop and enhance the United Nations electronic treaty database, which will enable the public to access an online up-to-date information on published treaties and international agreements. In that regard, South Africa shares the view, that the concerning backlog experienced in the publication of treaties can be eliminated by taking advantage of

recent technological advances and employing electronic means to publish the *Treaty Series*.

South Africa believes that by empowering the Secretariat with the discretion to publish or not to publish in extenso multilateral agreements that are to be published by their depositaries in a format similar to the series provided under Article 12(1) of the regulations, will assist to reduce the backlog experienced in the publication of treaties and free up resources which may be utilized to advance other areas.

Moreover, my delegation supports and advocates for the consideration of the employment of an online treaty registration system to facilitate submissions of treaties, including multilateral treaties and their instruments for registration as an additional option to the already existing measures of submission in electronic or hard-copy format, taking into consideration the challenges that many developing countries face in accessing information and communication technology.

Chairperson,

In conclusion, South Africa calls for the organization of workshops specialized for depositaries of multilateral treaties by the Treaty Section, with key focuses on treaty practices, functions and obligations by depositaries, and our government will continue to support and pledge its participation in the respective discussions in strengthening and promoting of the international treaty framework.

I thank you.