



**New Zealand Permanent Mission to the United Nations
Te Aka Aorere**

United Nations General Assembly: Sixth Committee Seventy-Ninth session – The Rule of Law at the National and International Levels

**CANZ Statement delivered by
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16 October 2024

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Thank you Chair,

I have the honour today of speaking on behalf of Australia, Canada, and my own country, New Zealand.

The rule of law is fundamental to the international rules-based system. It is central to maintaining international peace and security, political stability and for the protection, promotion and fulfilment of universal human rights.

This is particularly true now. The international system is under pressure, and the challenges we face as an international community are vast in scope and complexity. Respect for and adherence to the rules of international law, is the best guarantee we have to address these challenges, and to assure the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all people.

CANZ countries have always been and will continue to be strong supporters of the rule of law at both national and international levels. We recognise that the rule of law is founded on States upholding their international obligations in good faith, and we can only solve our biggest problems together. Our countries remain committed to rules-based multilateralism, with the United Nations at its core, and urge all States to promote and protect effective, inclusive, and accountable institutions that uphold the rule of law at national and international levels.

We thank the Secretary-General for his report on strengthening and coordinating United Nations rule of law activities. We are inspired by the enormous scope of work the United Nations is doing to promote and advance the rule of law both in concert with Member States and within the United Nations system. CANZ countries particularly support the recommitment to rule of law initiatives anchored in human rights law, implemented as part of the New Vision of the Secretary-General for the Rule of Law.

CANZ recognises the importance of the focus of today's debate on "The full, equal and equitable participation at all levels in the international legal system". Capacity building and technical assistance are key pillars of effort in pursuit of this objective, and essential to the achievement of peace and security, human rights and sustainable development. CANZ especially commends the work of United Nations administered trust funds aimed at assisting States to implement the Convention of the Law of the Sea and participate in ocean related work of the General Assembly, as well as the Secretary-General's trust fund to assist States in the settlement of disputes through the International Court of Justice.

CANZ countries reaffirm the critical role that women and girls play in upholding respect for the rule of law at the national and international levels. Our efforts to strengthen the rule of law are more effective when they take a gender-responsive approach. We commend the efforts made by the United Nations, as set out in the Secretary-General's report, to promote security and justice for women and girls, and the commitment to supporting Member States to address systemic and persistent barriers for women and girls in accessing justice as part of the Secretary-General's New Vision.

CANZ countries acknowledge the crucial work of international courts and

tribunals in maintaining the rules-based international order. We reaffirm our support for the International Court of Justice as the principal judicial organ of the United Nations and our recognition of its vital role in promoting the rule of law through the peaceful judicial settlement of disputes between States. It is imperative that states respect and abide by the Court's binding decisions. We call on all states which have not done so to accept the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice.

CANZ countries are also long-standing and active supporters of the International Criminal Court. The International Criminal Court contributes to the fight against impunity by ensuring the prosecution of the most serious international crimes where national authorities are unable or unwilling to do so. CANZ countries are committed to supporting the International Criminal Court in its work to ensure that those responsible for international crimes are held accountable. We call on all states who have not done so to ratify the Rome Statute.

With the increase in conflict around the world, it is more important than ever for states to adhere to their international humanitarian law obligations. We must accelerate efforts to foster compliance with these essential obligations, to better protect the people they are meant to serve, including humanitarian personnel. CANZ countries encourage the implementation of international humanitarian law within domestic legal frameworks, to enhance the safety of protected persons and objects.

We recognize that the rule of law and development are strongly interrelated and mutually reinforcing. In this respect, we reaffirm our commitment to Our Common Agenda and the 2030 Agenda. We recognize the importance of Sustainable Development Goal 16, which strives to promote just, peaceful, and inclusive societies. Agenda 2030 recognises the essential role of the rule of law and good governance and of transparent, effective and accountable institutions in sustainable development.

CANZ countries call on all States to work together to put an end to the practice of arbitrary detention of foreign nationals as a method to exert leverage over other countries. This practice undermines the rules and norms on which our international rules based system relies.

Respect for the rule of law is fundamental to the healthy functioning of domestic and international systems. International law must guide our responses to future challenges. This includes our responses to new and evolving technologies, cybercrime, violent extremism online, and ensuring the sustainable, responsible and peaceful use of outer space. While the problems we collectively face may be changing, our response must remain based in international law. The international rules-based system, with the rule of law at its core, must be defended.

As the Secretary-General states in his report, the steps taken by member States to strengthen the rule of law serve as the foundation upon which all our efforts to address today's challenges are based. CANZ countries support the Secretary-General's call for all Member States to promote, and adhere to, the rule of law within their own borders and internationally. This is foundational to the United Nations, and to our shared mission of peace,

respect for universal human rights and prosperity for all.

Thank you.