

DRAFT STATEMENT

79TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

UNDER AGENDA ITEM

“RULE OF LAW AT THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS”

Mr. Chairperson,

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of Uganda. Uganda aligns itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the African Group, the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the statement by the delegation of Austria

Chairperson, Uganda expresses its gratitude to the Secretary-General for his report as contained in document *A/79/117*, which highlights the United Nations rule of law activities at the national and international levels over the past 12 months. Mr. Chair, Uganda believes that the rule of law is important and the key principle of sovereignty equality of states which enables all states to participate in the law-making processes at regional and international levels.

Uganda expresses gratitude to the UN Secretary-General and his team for highlighting in the report the measures taken for the implementation of the new vision which recommits the Organization to people-centered rule of law initiatives, ensuring that work is informed by and responsive to the needs of individuals. It expands understanding of who benefits from, and is involved in, the efforts of the United Nations in strengthening rule of law and access to justice mechanisms, moving beyond traditional legal actors. The New Vision includes a commitment to gender equality and to supporting Member States to address systemic and persistent barriers for women and girls in accessing justice.

As we discuss the rule of law at both national and international levels, we should take stock and examine what has been achieved over the last 79 years of the United Nations. We should reflect on what needs to be accomplished in future. The rule of law compels us to reflect on the continuing relevance of this discussion to the political, social, economic and cultural environment we live in and how we can transform its promise into a living reality for all the people in the world we live in. This also reminds us of the tenets of the Universal Declaration, in so doing to reaffirm and to renew our attachment to these fundamental principles and to this vision. When we observe the society we now live in, it's clear that a lot remains to be

done in the field of rule of law, human rights protection and promotion. It is not time yet for us to relax.

Uganda fully ascribes to the classic definition of the rule of law as resting upon known general principles applicable on equal terms to all persons and respects and preserves the dignity, equality and human rights of all persons. Norms of international law including the rules based multilateral trading system must be reliable, predictable and equitable as they are critical in our attaining sustainable development.

We have only recently had cases of genocide in our region. We still have wars globally. We have displaced people in all regions in the world. Conditions of “absolute poverty” in the world around us are a cause for shame. These are situations that call for all countries to reconsider their positions and renew their commitments to the promotion of rule law both at national and international levels. We all must match our rhetoric with action.

Uganda recognizes the imperative for a collaborative framework that encompasses both the United Nations and its Member States to effectively tackle the evolving challenges of promoting rule of law at the national and international levels. In a world where terrorism, criminal activities no longer recognize national boundaries, the necessity for robust international partnerships becomes paramount. Such collaborations are crucial not only in combating the various manifestations of organized crime, terrorism, and corruption but also in fostering an environment where justice systems across borders can work in concert. These partnerships help streamline the exchange of strategic intelligence and facilitate capacity-building initiatives, thereby enhancing the overall efficacy of our crime prevention mechanisms.

Uganda is intensifying its efforts to combat emerging and complex trends that threaten our national security and the promotion of rule of law and impede sustainable development. We are particularly focused on addressing the challenges posed by emerging issues like cybercrime and environmental crime through the adoption of advanced technological solutions and comprehensive legislative reforms. These reforms aim to enhance our crime prevention and criminal justice systems, ensuring they are equipped to handle the intricacies of these modern threats. In addition to technological upgrades, Uganda recognizes the critical need for international cooperation and capacity building. Our partnerships with global entities are invaluable, providing us access to essential tools and knowledge that facilitate

effective responses to these sophisticated crime arenas. We are especially keen on collaborations that offer technical assistance and promote the exchange of best practices, which are fundamental in bolstering our national strategies.

Moreover, Uganda is committed to eradicating human trafficking and wildlife trafficking, which are severe violations of human rights and pose substantial threats to biodiversity and public health. Our strategy includes fortifying legislative measures and implementing stringent punitive actions designed to deter traffickers and hold them accountable through robust legal processes. We actively engage in sharing best practices and participating in international partnerships that aid in preventing these heinous crimes. The support from international bodies, notably the International Criminal Police Organization, is crucial. Their resources, including global databases and investigative tools, significantly enhance our capability to address these crimes effectively, ensuring that we can protect the most vulnerable members of our society and our natural heritage.

Lastly, the importance of environmental protection cannot be overstated within the context of our national security and economic prosperity. Crimes such as wildlife trafficking and illegal logging not only wreak havoc on our ecosystems but also have profound economic repercussions. Uganda is dedicated to advancing our legal and operational frameworks to combat these environmental crimes vigorously. By enhancing our legal frameworks and operational tactics, we aim to preserve our ecological resources, which are indispensable for the future well-being and economic stability of Uganda.

Mr. Chair, Uganda remains committed to international law and the rule of law which also includes enabling and encouraging the constant development of international law. The **International Law Commission** (ILC) plays an important role in this regard. Appropriate follow-up of states in the framework of the 6th Committee to draft articles prepared by ILC needs to be ensured. The work of the ILC – including reflection on already existing customary international law or preparation of legal solutions for pressing international topics – contributes to ensuring legal certainty. Uganda hopes the 6th Committee will be able to further support the development and codification of international law in this regard.

Lastly Chairperson,

Uganda is pleased to Chair both the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 & China in the year 2024. The Chairmanship of Uganda is anchored in the basic etiquette of international relations based on the universal principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations as well as the founding principles of the Non-Aligned Movement. The principles of the UN Charter and the recognition of universally acceptable norms of international law are indispensable in preserving and promoting peace and security, the rule of law, economic development, social progress and human rights for all.

I thank you.