



United Nations General Assembly Sixth Committee: Plenary debate on Strengthening and Promoting the International Treaty Framework

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Thank you, Chair.

I am pleased to speak today on behalf of Canada, New Zealand as well as my own country, Australia.

We welcome this Committee's ongoing work on strengthening and promoting the international treaty framework, which underpins the advancement of the rule of law and a strong multilateral system.

We will address "The role of technology in shaping treaty-making practice" and thank the Secretary-General for his report on this topic.

The attention of the UN is increasingly focused on how international law regulates technology and its use by States. The Secretary-General's report is right to acknowledge specific treaties that govern the use of technology. However, we must also recall that existing international law, including the



multilateral system's core treaties such as the UN Charter, also apply to the use of technologies, and provide an extensive framework to ensure their responsible use.

We agree with the report that the digitization of treaty records, and the online publication of treaty databases by depositaries, enhances public awareness and accessibility to treaties, and also promotes transparency in international relations. This is aligned with the objective of Article 102 of the UN Charter.

Technology has significantly advanced treaty making, including through virtual negotiations and stakeholder consultations. The increased use of digital transmission of diplomatic notes and instruments of full powers, accession and ratification, has allowed for an unprecedented level of flexibility among States when bringing treaties into force. We also praise the increased use of technology for the publication and dissemination of notifications by treaty depositaries.

Artificial intelligence is reshaping the foundations of our societies, and this is true of the whole treaty-making process and treaty implementation. We welcome the Report's acknowledgement of the role AI can play in assisting



States to facilitate the identification and analysis of treaty practices, as well as the need to carefully manage its use.

Technology has become essential to the work of CANZ countries' own treaty secretariats, ensuring our treaty collections are accessible on national websites. CANZ countries have also found technology to be a useful tool for domestic treaty approvals processes, including facilitating parliamentary processes and government approval of treaties.

CANZ encourages the work by United Nations Office for Legal Affairs' Treaties Section to develop an online treaty registration system to facilitate the electronic submissions of treaties to the UN. This would encourage compliance with Article 102 and would streamline data entry requirements, creating cost-savings and efficiencies.

When recognising the role that new technologies can play to develop and enhance electronic treaty databases, we must consider the challenges that many countries face in accessing information and communications technology. CANZ countries continue to support the development of resilient, secure and inclusive digital infrastructure, affordability and digital literacy to bridge this digital divide.



We encourage all States to take steps to build their cyber security in order to ensure safe and secure international communications on treaty matters, including negotiations.

Finally, our delegations take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the Treaties Section for its continued stewardship of the UN's treaty function and assistance to States ensuring that best practice in treaty making is preserved.

CANZ reiterates our support for continuing Member States' collective effort to promote and strengthen the international treaty framework.

Thank you.



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