

INVITATION

The Permanent Missions of the Republic of Singapore and Austria to the UN
and the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs

Invite you to attend a Side Event on the margins of
International Law Week

**SUPPORTING THE APPLICATION AND
INTERPRETATION OF MULTILATERAL TREATIES
TO PROMOTE THE RULE OF LAW**

Tuesday 24 October 2017

1.15 – 2.30 pm

UNHQ, Conference Room 6

**Open to all, particularly visiting legal advisers and
representatives to the Sixth Committee**

RSVP by 17 October 2017, to: <http://bit.ly/6sideevent>

SUPPORTING THE APPLICATION AND INTERPRETATION OF MULTILATERAL TREATIES TO PROMOTE THE RULE OF LAW

The rule of law provides the framework for orderly and predictable relations between individuals, entities, institutions and States, at the national and international levels. Multilateral treaties are an important tool in strengthening the rule of law. Multilateral treaty processes enhance universality, consolidate international consensus, provide certainty and accountability on rights and obligations, and facilitate the peaceful settlement of disputes.

Application of treaties is concerned with identifying the scope of treaties and determining their applicability to a particular situation or circumstance. Interpretation of treaties is concerned with ascribing the correct meaning to relevant provisions of those treaties and applying them to the situation at hand.

The processes of application and interpretation are often intertwined and the answers are not always straightforward. The Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties and other relevant rules of customary international law set out the framework according to which issues of application and interpretation are to be resolved. Very often, multilateral treaties will themselves contain provisions on application and interpretation, with provisions such as those concerning the scope of the treaty and definitions of particular terms or phrases. Where there persists a divergence of views between States Parties to a multilateral treaty, its provisions on the settlement of disputes become critical in setting out the manner by which such divergence may be resolved. In this regard, dispute settlement within the framework of the multilateral investment regime can provide illustrative examples.

A predictable, transparent and coherent approach to the application and interpretation of multilateral treaties is fundamental to supporting and strengthening the rule of law. The role of technical assistance and capacity building can make an important contribution. The United Nations assistance to Member States, upon their request, and identifying partnership with regional and international organizations are essential.

The event will seek to contribute to this goal by, among other things, identifying common challenges and sharing best practices and experiences. The event will promote an informal and open exchange of views, through the panel presentations and a question-and-answer session with the panellists.

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SIDE EVENT – INTERNATIONAL LAW WEEK

PROGRAM

Welcome & introductory remarks:

- H.E. Mr. Burhan Gafoor
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Singapore to the United Nations
Chair of the Sixth Committee, 72nd session of the UN General Assembly

Panel Discussion:

- Moderator: Ms. Daphne Hong, Director-General of the International Affairs Division,
Attorney-General's Chambers, Singapore

Panellists:

- Mr. Alejandro E. Alvarez
Chief, Rule of Law Unit, Executive Office of the Secretary-General
- Prof. August Reinisch
Member of the International Law Commission
"The multilateral investment regime and the rule of law"
- Mr. Santiago Villalpando
Chief, United Nations Treaty Section, Office of Legal Affairs
*"The UN Secretary-General's depositary role in the interpretation and application of
multilateral treaties"*
- Mr. Lionel Yee
Deputy Attorney-General of the Attorney-General's Chambers, Singapore

Moderated Discussion with Participants