



CROATIA

Statement by

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at the

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Sixth Committee

Agenda Item 83

The rule of law at the national and international levels

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Mr Chairman,

As this is the first time my delegation takes the floor at the 74th session of the Sixth Committee, I wish to congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau on your appointment.

Croatia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union and would also like to make some additional remarks from our national point of view on this important topic.

We thank the Secretary-General for his annual report on strengthening and coordinating United Nations rule of law activities and express support for his continued efforts in strengthening and promoting the rule of law.

Mr Chairman,

The rule of law constitutes an universal principle and a mechanism that supports the equality of all citizens before the law, secures a non-arbitrary form of government, and more generally prevents the arbitrary use of power. The key prerequisite to preserve this universal principle are competent, efficient, and responsible institutions, which build confidence and trust of individuals and communities to resolve their disputes peacefully. In this regard, the independence of the judicial system, together with its impartiality and integrity, is of utmost importance for upholding the rule of law and ensuring that there is no discrimination in the administration of justice.

Croatia remains an unequivocal advocate of the peaceful settlement of disputes between States and the avoidance of conflict, in accordance with the international law. It is our strong belief that adherence to the principles and values of international law and their faithful implementation plays an indispensable role for lasting peace and security worldwide.

Having in mind the importance, as well as consequences of their decisions, it is of the utmost importance that all international courts and tribunals meet the highest legal and moral standards. Independence, impartiality and integrity of international courts and tribunals are crucial and represent a very essence of their existence. Any form of violation of these pivotal legal elements directly affects the legitimacy and authority of their decisions. Compromising the impartiality or independence of international courts or tribunals leads to the undermining of the rule of law and makes their decisions legally void, and discourages States in considering third-party dispute settlement.

Mr Chairman,

Croatia strongly supports the full and unequivocal implementation of international humanitarian and criminal law, as well as all efforts aimed at ending the impunity for all atrocities.

In that context, as a victim of the worst crimes committed in Europe after the WWII, Croatia particularly stresses the importance of scrupulous interpretation and rigorous application of the existing international humanitarian and criminal law in the processes in front of the courts and tribunals. In this regard, Croatia did not hesitate to do its part in ensuring accountability. Any attempt to circumvent the rules and principles of international humanitarian and criminal law, or any quasi-institute introduced with relation to jurisdiction with the solely purpose of selective approach in prosecuting the perpetrators of the worst crimes, represent a serious risk to the peace and stability and do not bring justice and comfort to the victims and their families.

As a State Party to the Rome Statute, Croatia respects the independence of the International Criminal Court, which we consider the most important instrument to fight impunity for the most serious international crime, and we strongly support its work. Also, we thank the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal tribunals, and all other similar Criminal Courts for the tasks they performed and call on all States to cooperate with them, in full compliance with their obligations under the relevant Security Council resolutions.

I thank you.