



75th session of the Sixth Committee
Report of the International Law Commission
on the work of its seventy-second session
(*Agenda item 80*)

Statement by Portugal – Mr. Sergio Carvalho (Legal Adviser)

Mr. Chairman,

As we commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations, it is imperative to recall the success of the organisation as the cornerstone of a multilateral order based on the respect for and development of International Law.

It is only fair that the international community at large – and the Sixth Committee in particular – acknowledges and praises the role played by the International Law Commission in contributing to the codification and progressive development of International Law that allowed the United Nations to reach that success.

The Commission has critically supported the General Assembly, particularly its Sixth Committee, in carrying out its mandate under Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. Chairman,

It is unfortunate that, in a year of celebration, the work of the International Law Commission itself would also be severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Portugal regrets that the projected work and outputs of the Commission at its seventy-second session have been impacted by these unprecedented circumstances.



In light of this challenging situation, we fully understand and support the decisions taken by the General Assembly to ensure the health and safety of the Members of the International Law Commission and of the staff assisting them, as well as to guarantee that the necessary conditions are met for the Commission to carry out its work and deliberations in view of its intense current programme of work.

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to thank [*the Chair / the Chair Designate*] of the International Law Commission, [*Mr. Šturma / Mr. Hmoud*], as well as the Secretariat, for their oral reports on the work carried out by the Commission this year.

We understand that the many difficulties experienced this year have not prevented the Commission from making progress where possible, by using technology and other means to assist their work, including by holding informal meetings such as the one that took place recently on September 3rd.

Portugal would also like to thank the Special Rapporteurs – Mr. Tladi, **Ms.** Lehto and **Ms.** Escobar Hernández – for the oral presentations they made during the virtual informal session of October 28. We also express our appreciation for the informative remarks presented at the same session by Ms. Oral and Mr. Aurescu, Co-Chairs of the Study Group on Sea Level Rise in relation to International Law.

Mr. Chairman,

Portugal welcomes the extension of the deadline for comments to be submitted on certain topics currently studied by the Commission. This is a pragmatic approach that makes the most of the unfortunate situation that led to the postponement of the Seventy-Second Session of the Commission.



We hope that this extension of the deadline encourages Governments, international organisations and others, as applicable, to submit relevant comments on those topics.

Mr. Chairman,

In the wake of the 75th Anniversary of the UN, we must proceed with confidence and use all available means – technological, human and others deemed necessary – to mitigate the delays in the work of the Commission in 2020.

Portugal is confident that the International Law Commission will be up to this task.

We are certain that the Seventy-Second and Seventy-Third sessions of the International Law Commission will be a testimony of the resilience and resourcefulness of all its Members, in carrying out the important mandate that the Commission shares with this very Committee.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.