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UNITED STATES MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

United States Statement
75th General Assembly Sixth Committee
Agenda Item 86: Rule of Law at the National and International Levels
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Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States would like to thank the Secretary General for his report on this agenda item.

We would also like to thank the Rule of Law Coordination and Resource Group and the Rule of Law Unit. The individuals who perform this work often do so under very difficult circumstances. We are deeply grateful for their efforts.

The Secretary General's report identifies a number of concerning trends. It says that in many areas of the globe, the COVID-19 pandemic has compounded vulnerabilities in the rule of law landscape.

Among the most concerning of the Secretary General's findings are those related to corruption. Corruption is a corrosive force. It erodes trust in institutions. It increases the imbalance between those with power and those without. And it goes hand-in-hand with the defiance of international norms. For these reasons, it is only appropriate that the Sixth Committee chose to address the issue during this year's session.

In post-conflict scenarios, the United Nations and other international actors face the daunting challenge of providing assistance without inadvertently supporting the networks of corruption that may have contributed to conflict in the first place. Indeed, the first clause of the preamble to the UN Convention against Corruption draws a direct connection between corruption and the erosion of the rule of law. The preamble highlights the "seriousness of problems and threats posed by corruption to the stability and security of societies, undermining the institutions and values of democracy, ethical values and justice and jeopardizing sustainable development and the rule of law."

With respect to the work before us in the coming weeks, we hope that the Sixth Committee will be able to reach a consensus on a subtopic for next year. We think that the past practice of selecting subtopics can lead to more focused and productive debates on the rule of law in this forum.

Finally, let me say that when we gather here in the Sixth Committee, we do so on the basis of an implicit understanding. That at its best, legal discourse is a substitute for more dangerous ways to approach problems.

In our view, that same understanding is fundamental to preserving the rule of law. If the rule of law is protected, then the rules-based international legal order is also protected, and we will be better able to collectively address the pressing global challenges before us.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.