



SIXTH COMMITTEE

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Statement by

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Mr. Chairperson,

Israel expresses its gratitude and appreciation for the great efforts made by the UNCITRAL Secretariat in adapting to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. These efforts were evident in the organization of the two-part 2020 Commission Sessions in July and September, held for the first time in UNCITRAL's history in virtual and hybrid formats. Even though the circumstances were not ideal, the Commission, with the invaluable assistance of the Secretariat, managed to move things forward and make important decisions for its 2020-2021 work program and beyond.

Israel congratulates the Commission for the entry into force of the Singapore Convention on International Commercial Settlement Agreements Resulting from Mediation last month. Israel was extensively engaged in the efforts of Working Group II in negotiating the text of the Convention. The current global health crisis further stresses the need for flexible, adjustable international dispute settlement mechanisms such as mediation. The Singapore Convention has the potential to provide certainty among parties to international transactions with respect to the enforceability of agreements resulting from such a process. The Convention, if ratified on a global scale, could significantly contribute to the promotion of the use of mediation in international trade and to the efficient dispute resolution of cross-border commercial disputes.

We also very much welcome the Commission's decision to organize a colloquium in order to further explore legal issues related to the digital economy. The colloquium is expected to address, among other topics, the development of tools to better facilitate dispute resolution in the field of high-tech, based on a joint proposal submitted by Israel and Japan to the Commission in 2019. Israel, in co-operation with Japan, the Czech Republic and the UNCITRAL Secretariat, organized various events in the past few months, at which this issue was discussed. It is clear today, more than ever, that UNCITRAL is best suited to develop universal tools to advance the creation of new and innovative mechanisms designed to optimize dispute resolution processes in the global high-tech sector. These tools might also prove useful and applicable to other sectors as well.

Mr. Chairperson

Looking to the coming months, we encourage the Commission to be pro-active in assisting its members and observers in addressing the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. One way to do so could be to develop a platform for States to exchange best practices and legislative experiences quickly and efficiently. Such a platform could assist States, for example, with adapting domestic legal frameworks, in order to address the need to digitalize services, which are needed more than ever in light of current social distancing requirements. These legal frameworks will also be able to address the impact of travel restrictions on dispute resolution processes and the economic hardships related to the pandemic.

Finally, we would like to note Israel's support for the initiative to enlarge the membership of UNCITRAL. Our hope is that by the 2021 Commission session, consensus could be achieved in respect of the geographic allocation of new seats. We see the enlargement of UNCITRAL as important and beneficial both for the organization, as well as for international trade law in general, and we believe that the success of the initiative is imperative.

Israel looks forward to continuing to work closely with fellow member and observer states and the UNCITRAL Secretariat, in developing universal legal tools to promote global trade, an especially pertinent endeavor in face of the economic crisis we are all facing these days.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.