



**PERMANENT MISSION OF SINGAPORE
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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**STATEMENT BY MR NATHANIEL KHNG,
COUNSELLOR (LEGAL), PERMANENT MISSION OF SINGAPORE
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
ON AGENDA ITEM 78, ON THE REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS
COMMISSION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE LAW ON THE WORK
OF ITS FIFTY-THIRD SESSION,
SIXTH COMMITTEE,
10 NOVEMBER 2020**

1 Thank you Mr Chair. Singapore would like to thank the Chair of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law, Ambassador Eric Anderson Machado, and the Commission's Secretariat for the Commission's report. We would also like to commend the Chair for his stewardship of the 53rd Session, as well as the Secretary and her team for their dedication and professionalism, especially considering that the 53rd Session was conducted in an unprecedented manner, with the deployment of technological tools and new work methods in response to restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Our statement will focus on three main areas.

Singapore Convention on Mediation

2 First, the entry into force of the United Nations Convention on International Commercial Settlement Agreements Resulting from Mediation, also known as the Singapore Convention on Mediation, on 12 September 2020, just over a year after it opened for signature. This milestone was marked by a digital commemorative event, which was jointly organised by Singapore and the Commission. It is a significant development, as the Convention enables international settlement agreements resulting from mediation to be enforced or invoked more readily, filling a gap in the enforcement framework for cross-border commercial disputes. In times of economic uncertainty, such as the present due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Convention is of particular importance as it allows businesses to confidently rely on mediation, which has advantages over adversarial forms of dispute resolution, as an option for the the resolution of cross-border disputes.

3 Singapore would like to extend its appreciation to the Commission and Member States for their contributions to the development and success of this important instrument. The Convention bears testament to multilateralism and the continued commitment of Member States to a rules-based international order. To date, the Convention has 53 signatories and six parties. We hope that Member States will recognise the benefits that the Convention will bring for mediation and international commerce, and we look forward to having more countries on board as parties to the Convention in the near future. My delegation stands ready to provide interested delegations with more information on the Convention.

Commission's Response to the COVID-19 pandemic

4 Turning next to the work of the Commission at its 53rd Session, we commend the Commission for its timely and appropriate response to the problems and challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, we welcome the series of public webinars that were organised in conjunction with the 53rd Session, which have been useful to the international community. The six virtual panels considered the role that the Commission's texts could play in assisting States with their COVID-19 economic response and recovery efforts, demonstrating the relevance of the Commission's work. The new work methods that were developed by the Commission and the lessons that were learnt will stand the Commission in good stead, not only for future disruptions but also in normal times because they promote the efficient use of available resources.

Work Programme of the Commission

5 Finally, in relation to the ongoing and future work of the Commission, we note that there is a promising and impressive list of proposals for future work by the Commission, and exploratory and preparatory work being undertaken in this connection by the Secretariat. While we welcome the ambition, we note that the list has more potential topics than there are available working groups to undertake the projects. In this regard, there may be a need to set priorities in light of limited resources and increasing challenges. We therefore support the approach of the Commission in considering collaboration with other international organisations like the Hague Conference on Private International Law and UNIDROIT, and suggest that, where appropriate, the Commission also consider collaborating with other suitable global partners.

Conclusion

6 Mr Chair, to conclude, Singapore remains a strong supporter of the Commission and will continue to contribute to its important work. Thank you very much for your attention.

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