

Translated from Spanish

Permanent Mission of El Salvador to the United Nations

Consideration of effective measures to enhance the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives

Report of El Salvador pursuant to General Assembly resolution 73/205

New York, 15 May 2020

El Salvador is submitting the present report pursuant to General Assembly resolution 73/205, in which States were invited to provide their views with respect to any measures needed or already taken to enhance the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives, as well as missions and representatives with diplomatic status to international intergovernmental organizations. They were also urged to report to the Secretary-General, in a concise and expeditious manner and in accordance with the guidelines prepared by him, serious violations of the protection, security and safety of those missions.

El Salvador recognizes the importance of fulfilling the commitments under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, which are based on the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations concerning the sovereign equality of States, the maintenance of international peace and security, and the promotion of friendly relations among nations.

It is therefore especially important that States take all appropriate measures to prevent attacks on diplomatic and consular representatives and those accredited to international intergovernmental organizations, to protect the premises of missions against any intrusion or damage and to prevent any disturbance of the peace of the mission or impairment of its dignity. They also need to have adequate national laws to prevent, investigate and prosecute such illegal acts and to implement related plans and initiatives.

As stated in previous reports, El Salvador has set up effective protection mechanisms, including standing measures, to meet the requirements of missions and their representatives. They involve the Directorate-General of Protocol and Honours of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Civil Police, through the Division of Protection of Dignitaries. The Salvadoran authorities have thus met all requirements and put in place the security and protection measures requested by the missions and international bodies accredited to El Salvador.

Under the criminal law of El Salvador, a serious offence against the individual freedom of persons entitled to special protection under international law is considered an aggravated offence and hence punishable with a higher prison term. Security protocols and those regarding threats to missions and their representatives have also been bolstered, with a view to facilitating the investigation of such incidents and bringing legal action against the perpetrators.

With regard to the measures needed to enhance the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives in the country, the National Civil Police has

been alerted to all illegal acts affecting diplomatic agents, their mission premises and those of international organizations with a view to initiating the corresponding investigations and bringing the perpetrators to justice, in compliance with the obligations acquired under the aforementioned Conventions. That said, to date no serious violations of the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions or representatives based in El Salvador have been committed.

In addition, with reference to the guidelines embodying relevant questions that States might wish to consider when reporting serious violations of the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives, as well as of missions and representatives with diplomatic status to international intergovernmental organizations, set out in the annex to a report of the Secretary-General (A/42/485), El Salvador reaffirms the importance of States abiding by good practices in terms of reporting under those guidelines and enforcing the applicable rules of international law in that regard.

The security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions is always under threat and subject to risks. In June 2018, for example, the Permanent Mission of El Salvador to the United Nations in New York learned that one of its diplomatic agents had been attacked in the New York City subway system and, in August 2019, that one of its official vehicles had been vandalized. El Salvador appreciates the readiness with which the local authorities responded to both of those unfortunate incidents. Nonetheless, in accordance with the applicable conventions, measures to protect diplomatic and consular missions and representatives accredited to their territory must be strengthened.

El Salvador recognizes the importance of continued compliance with its obligations in this regard, to enable diplomatic and consular missions and their representatives to efficiently carry out their functions, including the protection and defence afforded to the nationals of sending States. Our country therefore will continue to participate in discussions on the issue in the Sixth Committee of the General Assembly and to closely monitor emerging risks and threats to security and safety, such as that generated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which poses a major challenge to the international community.
