



**Statement by Texine Daw, First Secretary at Permanent Mission of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana to the United Nations at the Plenary Meeting of the Sixth Committee on Agenda Item 83 - “The Rule of Law at National and International levels”**

**October 16, 2023, UNHQ in New York**

Thank you Chair

Guyana aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

I thank the Secretary General for the report under this agenda item and note with appreciation his New Vision for the rule of law.

Adherence to the rule of law is the foundation of friendly and equitable relations between States. It is critical to peace, security, political stability, and economic and social development. It is also the social contract between people and State.

The rule of law is the foundation on which the United Nations rests. It requires adherence to the principles of supremacy of the law, equality and fairness in the application of the law, separation of powers, legal certainty, accountability, transparency and the avoidance of arbitrariness.

Sadly, there is a global decline in respect for the rule of law which is exacerbated by conflict situations and disregard for human rights. We must collectively insist that the rule of law is always adhered to without

exception. The many violations we see today are not due to the inadequacy of these rules, but an apparent unwillingness to implement and respect them.

Key to the rule of law is the peaceful settlement of international disputes and accountability for international crimes. It must also be emphasized that the rule of law entails fully respecting and giving effect to the binding decisions of international courts and tribunals.

Chair

Guyana welcomes the theme of today's discussions. Digitalization is transforming the way in which we access justice. It is also removing barriers to access.

The report of the Secretary General states that digitalization can advance access to justice by creating easy, inclusive, and accessible filing or complaint mechanisms and processes for those with Internet access.

In Guyana, digital technology is being used widely to support our court operations, improve efficiency and advance access to justice. E-filing, digital case management, and virtual courts are now part of our judicial operations.

Digital technology is also contributing to increased reporting and prosecution of domestic violence and child abuse cases. Specially equipped interview and virtual hearing rooms facilitate recording of interviews with domestic violence survivors and allow for such cases to be heard virtually. Children are relieved of the burden of having to give statements multiple times in an environment that does not create injustice

when they seek justice. In relation to court cases, rather than having to face the public or the perpetrator, domestic violence survivors can have their matters heard virtually. Guyana has been able to improve its juvenile justice system. We acknowledge the support of UNICEF in setting up these facilities.

Chair

While digital technologies are contributing positively to justice and development, there is also significant misuse and increased criminal activity online. Strong legal frameworks are required to protect users. There must be respect and protection for human rights and data privacy.

Guyana continues to engage actively in the negotiations of the Ad Hoc Committee to elaborate a Comprehensive International Convention on Countering the Use of Information and Communications Technologies for Criminal Purposes.

Chair

While digital technology is improving access to justice for vulnerable groups, lack of access can serve as a barrier to equal access to justice. Digital divides must therefore be bridged.

The government of Guyana is investing in providing internet access to all communities, including those living in rural and remote areas. Simultaneously, Guyana is strengthening the rule of law by building capacity of its judiciary and security forces, including by providing training, improved infrastructure, and technology.

Chair

Guyana reiterates its commitment to the UN Charter, adherence of the rule of law, and to ensuring equal access to justice for all.

I Thank you.