799 UNITED NATIONS PLAZA
NEWYORK,N.Y.10017-3505

UNITED STATES MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Statement of the United States of America

United Nations General Assembly 70th Session
Sixth Committee
Rule of Law
Agenda Item 85
Statement by Stephen Townley, Counsellor October 14, 2015

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We welcome this opportunity once again to address the rule of law at the national and international levels.

Before turning to our particular topic this year, I would note that, in line with resolution 69/123, the United States submitted information to the Rule of Law Unit on its practices with regard I

2

Turning now to our subject for this year, we welcome the opportunity to discuss the role of multilateral treaties in promoting and advancing the rule oflaw.

Multilateral treaties play important roles in promoting and advancing the rule of law across a broad range of subjects. To give

4

With regard to treaty implementation, this Committee can play an important role in allowing states to exchange information and identify best practices with a view to helping states strengthen their approaches, and their commitment to, treaty implementation.

And, of course, it goes without saying that states need to be able to participate in multilateral treaty regimes once they have been negotiated and once states are in position to implement them. In that regard, we would also like to highlight and commend the Office of Legal Affairs for its work in support of the Secretary General's depositary function, and to encourage an update to the Guide to Depositary Practice, within existing resources. This Guide is an extremely useful resource for states and helps facilitate their effective participation in multilateral treaty regimes.

Finally, in addition to considerations relating to clarity and implementation, we also believe that the effectiveness of treaties can be advanced by greater public understanding and awareness. We recognize and commend OLA's work to expand access to information about treaties, including its excellent UN treaty collection website and its organization of the annual treaty event. From our perspective, we have recently sought to publicize to state and local officials the human rights treaties to which the U.S. is party. And, of course, the Geneva Conventions include an obligation to disseminate them. But it would be useful to understand what the practice in other instruments has been, and how states themselves have gone about making treaties known, not only to other states, but internally While Article 102 of the Charter concerned the importance of other states understanding the legal regimes in place, today, it is equally key that our citizens understand the obligations their governments are preparing to undertake or have undertaken. We think it would be very useful to discuss further how best to achieve this.

Mr. Chairman, this topic is an especially rich one and we look forward to its consideration during this session of the Sixth Committee.

Thank you.