



Statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States

By

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Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations

at the Sixth Committee

on

Agenda item 84

"The Rule of Law at the national and international levels"

United Nations

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- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia , Montenegro , Serbia and Albania , the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

I would like to start by thanking the UN Secretary General for his report of 20 July 2016, which highlights the instrumental role played by the UN in promotion of a system based on the rule of law at national and international levels. I would like also to thank the Deputy Secretary General for his presentation of the report, and comm

We appreciate the focus in the third and fourth parts of the report on the subtopics of debate at the current Sixth Committee session, namely *"Sharing national practices of States in the implementation of multilateral treaties"* and *"Practical measures to facilitate access to justice for all, including for the poorest and most vulnerable"*.

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is key to fulfilling the right to a fair trial. Access to justice enables people to claim rights to an effective remedy to address injustices and discrimination. There are strong links between securing access to justice

role, both in our engagement with partner countries and with international and regional organizations.

The EU and its Member States continues to be one of the largest financial contributors to transitional justice initiatives worldwide, providing financing for justice, truth-seeking initiatives, institutional reform and reparations programmes including through support to civil society and

Mr. Chairman,

Unhindered access to justice for women is critical for the achievement of gender equality. Women, nonetheless, face many difficulties in gaining access to justice as a result of direct and indirect discrimination. The success of the 2030 Agenda therefore requires appropriate policy and legal frameworks, to enable those affected by discrimination to claim and realize their rights. We will continue to make a strong contribution to preventing, and responding to, all forms of violence against women and girls, including through access to justice.

In the framework of the women, peace and security agenda, we have highlighted our commitment to enhancing women's access to justice, including transitional justice mechanisms, and to build capacity for the prosecution of crimes against women and girls and the protection of witnesses. We will therefore ensure that our justice and their ability to secure redress. To this end, the EU has been supporting access to justice for victims through a global programme on gender-sensitive transitional justice implemented jointly with UN Women. Also, through the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI), the EU supports a project together with the Council of Europe on women's equal access to justice in Eastern Partnership countries.

We support measures that protect and enable children to access justice, and ensure their involvement in the work of trans recovery and long term reintegration into society, and in a way that respects the best interests of the child in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The EU and its Member States actively promotes measures to guarantee the right of access to justice for persons belonging to minorities, by ensuring that the right to interpretation and translation is respected for those suspected or accused persons who are unable to speak or understand the language of the proceedings.

We are committed to ensure access to justice for people with disabilities in all stages of legal proceedings and to protect and promote their rights in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Over the past two years Europe has been confronted with unprecedented flows of refugees, asylum seekers and irregular migrants. In the face of this great challenge, the EU and its Member States have sought to facilitate access to justice, legal assistance, witness protection, health and socio-psychological support for refugees, migrants and asylum seekers. Under the overarching external migration policy – the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility- the EU supports projects in partner countries to improve access to justice for migrants.

We welcome the continuous engagement of civil society and other international and regional institutions to improve access to justice. Through the EIDHR, the EU supports a project with the ILO - based monitoring mechanism. The EU and its Member States are working closely with the Council of Europe and with the OECD in establishing a set of recommendations for improving inclusive access to justice. Recently, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) and the European Court of Human Rights launched a practical handbook on European law relating to access to justice.

Moreover, we encourage the use of modern technologies in order to promote access to justice.

Mr. Chairman,

with Article 102 of the UN Charter. We welcome the use of new technologies for the Treaty

number of actions with an objective of boosting ownership of local actors in delivering support to public institutions and justice systems, including monitoring and promoting the compliance by partner countries of their international obligations. EU continues mainstreaming co-operation at the UN into bilateral human rights and political dialogues by systematically raising recommendations stemming from the work of treaty monitoring bodies, the Human Rights C

Mr. Chairman,

As the Secretary-general rightly says, "*respect for the rule of law and human rights while countering terrorism is a fundamental basis for all measures to prevent and counter terrorism*". With its member states, the EU is committed to take comprehensive action against terrorism in full compliance with international law, its fundamental values and international human rights standards. It is necessary to put more emphasis on the prevention of terrorism, in particular countering radicalization, on recruitment, equipment and financing of terrorism, and address underlying factors such as conflict, poverty, proliferation of arms and state fragility that provide opportunities for terrorist groups to flourish.

The EU and its Member States are committed to continue to promote more peaceful and inclusive societies, based on effective rule of law and good governance and building transparent, effective and accountable institutions. The EU and its Member States advocate a comprehensive and joined-up approach across the three pillars of the UN to further strengthen the rule of law and we call for all to contribute their fair share to this effort.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.