



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

The Candidate Countries, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia , Montenegro 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.

*Strengthening and Coordinating UN rule of law activities (A/73/253)* and would like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Fabrizio Hochschild-Drummond for his presentation. We commend the UN for continuing to meet the requests and needs of Member States across all continents in key areas such as ensuring effective and functioning justice and security institutions; accountability for serious crimes under international law; other transitional justice initiatives; access to justice, in particular for marginalized persons; justice and security for women and girls; anti-corruption and strengthening national institutions to prevent violence and counter terrorism and crime.

strengthen the rule of law is crucial in order to address challenges and worrying trends across the globe. We welcome measures relating to security and armed violence reduction supported by the UN including to address demands for justice for human rights violations and abuses in communities recovering from conflicts and crises; to curb excessive use of force and human rights abuses and violations by militias and security forces; to strengthen protection and inclusion of persons in vulnerable situations such as IDPs and refugees needed due to weak institutions; to end violence against women and mitigate the circumstances that enable it such as mass displacement, incitement and encouragement of gender-based violence; to address corrupt practices affecting the integrity and impartiality of justice systems and the transparency of legislative processes; as well as to counter attacks on the independence of the judiciary.

Gender equality is a high priority for the EU and its Member States. We must ensure that women fully enjoy the benefits of the rule of law, by using law to uphold their equal rights

tribunals to resolve inter-state disputes and to promote a rules-based international legal order. We underline that international treaties and binding decisions are essential to harmonise international relations and should be interpreted and implemented in good faith in order to address emerging threats to political and economic stability and transnational and international crimes.

Mr. Chair,

UN rule of law assistance at the national and international levels is becoming ever more critical, particularly in addressing the root causes of conflict and crises and for sustaining peace. It has been noted previously that more efforts, political will and resources are necessary in response to the challenges highlighted by the Secretary-General. We recognise the need for the UN to evolve and to enhance preparedness to address emerging global threats, including by reorienting peacekeeping with more focused and achievable mandates that recognise the rule of law and match the resources available. We acknowledge the need for comprehensive transition strategies from peace operations to development assistance, including by addressing funding gaps faced by UN Country Teams and enhancing political and security support after mission drawdown in order for Member States to achieve sustainable development and lasting peace.

The EU and its Member States welcome the high priority placed by the Secretary-General on the rule of law. We welcome the progress which has been made in attaining system-wide strategic coordination and coherence on rule of law engagement and enhancing results, including through the global focal point arrangement for police, justice and corrections. We encourage the Executive Office of the Secretary-General to continue to bring together partners across the UN that have an impact on peace and security, human rights and development

