



**International Law Commission
Seventieth anniversary**

Statement

by

Mr. Miguel de Serpa Soares,
Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs
and United Nations Legal Counsel

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Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Mr. Chair,
Distinguished members of the International Law Commission,
Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Secretary-General, I am delighted to be with you in Geneva for this commemorative meeting marking the seventieth session of the International Law Commission.

It is pleasing to see many legal advisers in the audience, as well as present and former members of the International Law Commission, academics, and representatives from regional bodies and other organizations. An occasion like this presents us with an opportunity to honour the International Law Commission and to exchange thoughts, insights and ideas on its past achievements and future challenges. I encourage all of us to actively participate in the discussions.

During the earlier commemoration in New York, on 21 May, I recalled that the Commission held its first session in Lake Success, New York, in 1949. On this occasion, it seems appropriate to add that the Commission's predecessor met here, at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, 25 years earlier. On 12 December 1924, in the room that we are meeting in today, the Council of the League of Nations established the "Committee for the Progressive Codification of International Law". The Committee consisted of 17 experts in international law and was tasked to identify questions that were "sufficiently ripe" for codification.

Similar to the Commission, the members of the Committee served in their personal capacity and, as a whole, represented the main forms of civilization and the principal legal systems of the world. It comprised many noted international lawyers of the day, such as José Gustavo Guerrero, from El Salvador, who later



