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Statement by Lieve Caron, UK Assistant Legal Adviser, at the UN Sixth Committee.

We would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report. Upholding and promoting the rule of law, both at home and abroad, is a priority for the UK.

As our Prime Minister made clear at the UN General Assembly, the United Kingdom will proudly stand up for our values and the rule of law.

We remain a strong supporter of the United Nations, the UN Charter, and the Group of Friends on the Rule of Law.

The rule of law is the cornerstone of any just, and prosperous society.

Not only does it play a vital role in sustaining peace by helping to address the root causes of conflict and insecurity, it is also fundamental to economic growth, enhanced security, and sustainable development.

The rule of law creates the stability and legal certainty needed for investment and innovation.

Chair,

The UK Foreign Secretary, Ed Miliband, stated that we face a period of growing instability and increasing threats to international law and democracy.

At such a time, the rule of law is more important than ever.

We will continue to promote these values globally and do so in three ways.

Firstly, through multilateral cooperation.

Secondly, by supporting the development of international law.

And thirdly, by promoting accountability.

Firstly, on multilateral cooperation.

In times of crisis and global uncertainty, the rule of law is our anchor, it holds the international system steady and enables our multilateral institutions to function effectively.

It underpins the legitimacy of multilateral action, giving those actions credibility and authority.

Without it, multilateralism becomes fragmented and politicised.

We stand firm in our commitment to institutions that defend the international rule of law, and which tackle shared problems that threaten the resilience of the international system.

Institutions such as the International Court of Justice are vital in ensuring that all States have equal access to justice and peaceful means to resolve conflict.

To ensure they remain relevant and effective, it is essential that we see the very best candidates taking up positions within them.

That is why we are delighted to support Professor Dapo Akande's candidacy for the ICJ.

He is an outstanding candidate who would bring to the Court a distinguished record of expertise, as well as a global and independent perspective.

Chair,

It is important that everyone is able to contribute to the international rule of law, and the institutions that uphold it.

This is why the UK was pleased to contribute over £140,000 this year to the UN Programme of Assistance, as well as the ICJ judicial fellowship among others.

Multilateralism and the rule of law reinforce one another as foundations of the international system.

Addressing challenges to both requires an approach that promotes inclusive participation and fosters dialogue and diplomacy.

This is why we welcome the UN80 reform initiative as a critical opportunity to refocus the organisation and bolster the UN's impact.

UN80 should result in a UN that is more efficient, effective, and coherent.

A UN that is better able to support governments to tackle the key challenges we face today.

Secondly, the UK continues to play a leading role in shaping international legal discourse.

For instance, the UK strongly supports the International Law Commission, as well as the dialogue with the Sixth Committee.

We therefore contributed to the Trust on Foreign Assistance for Special Rapporteurs, to enable them to continue their work.

We're also pleased to chair the Steering Committee for the London Conference on International Law.

The 4th Conference was held in London last week, bringing together a global audience of international law experts from government, private practice, academia, and civil society to discuss current challenges.

Chair,

The UK takes a proactive approach to defending the international rules that underpin security and prosperity.

For example, through our leadership on freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz to strengthen the international legal framework on which security and economic prosperity depend.

Finally, we are committed to supporting accountability for the most serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

The UK remains a strong supporter of the International Criminal Court and its independent role in holding perpetrators to account and achieving justice for victims.

Accountability for the most serious international crimes has never been more important.

The rule of law is not simply a principle; it is a priority.

It is essential to sustaining peace, protecting human rights, and building prosperous and resilient societies.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-rule-of-law-is-the-cornerstone-of-any-just-and-prosperous-society-uk-statement-at-the-un-sixth-committee>