

Statement of H.E. Mr. Mahe ÔU. S. Tupouniua
Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Tonga to the United Nations
On Agenda Item 80 United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching,
Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law
At the Sixth Committee of the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly

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Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for giving Tonga the floor to speak on this Agenda Item and let me start by aligning my statement with that delivered by Ecuador on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. Chairman,

The dissemination of international law is an essential means for the effective participation of small island developing State like my own, the international legal arena, notwithstanding the crucial role it plays in promoting the rule of law at the national and international levels promoting friendly relations and cooperation amongst States.

As such, and as mentioned in our intervention under Agenda Item 84, the work of the Secretary-General and the Office of Legal Affairs and its specialized agencies is essential in ensuring the dissemination of international law through the Programme of Assistance

Mr. Chairman,

Limited human capacity is a reality for my country. Our legal counsels are too often inundated with domestic legal affairs and can only engage to a limited extent on international legal matters. Lack of funding also is an impediment for our legal counsels to attend international legal meetings. However, with the Programme of Assistance, the foundational knowledge of our legal counsels in international law has expanded. It is the core tool for the training of lawyers, particularly government officials to better appreciate, apply

Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law. The work undertaken by the Office of Legal Affairs and its specialized divisions has benefitted Tonga immensely from the trainings and provision of materials, to online sources such as the Audiovisual Library, more recently the International Law Handbook. We recognize and appreciate the Regional Courses over the past years and we support its retention. As a developing State, particularly as a small island developing State, we would also like to see the inclusion of the topic, International law and sustainable development

