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Remarks by Sahak Sargsyan, second secretary, Permanent Mission of Armenia to the United Nations

this context, it is important to recall the duty of all states to refrain from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes and principles of the UN and to settle their international disputes by peaceful means in accordance with Chapter VI and by maintaining international peace and security, and justice.

As a nation who experienced the first genocide of the 20th century and continues to face the denial of this horror, Armenia reaffirms its strong support to the fight against impunity for the most serious crimes, such as genocide and crimes against humanity. These crimes may be committed in situations where international judicial mechanisms are inefficient and the integrity of state's internal justice system is seriously challenged by the perpetrators of the crime. We are of the view that human rights, including peoples' right to self-determination, the rule of law and democracy are mutually reinforcing and belong to the universal and indivisible core values and principles of the United Nations.

Mr. Chair,

It is our firm belief that it is possible to effectively promote the rule of law internationally only if it has strong domestic footing. Armenia's Constitution guarantees that all persons are equal before the law and everyone is entitled to equal access to the legal system. Since regaining its independence Armenia recognized that broad based reform and institution building in the public administration was necessary to underpin its private sector led growth agenda. One of the key building blocks has been the creation of a more efficient, effective, and independent judiciary to be better able to provide services to citizens, promote more predictable rule of law, and better enforce contracts and encourage commercial activities and investments. Legal reforms included the creation of a three-tiered structure of courts of general jurisdiction under the 1995 Constitution. A second phase of judicial reform began with a constitutional amendment in 2005 intended to reduce the dominant role of the presidency in the court system and increase the independence of the judiciary. A Judicial Code passed in 2007 further reorganized the courts and introduced a doctrine analogous to precedent in common law systems. Since the last year broad public discussions have been underway in Armenia to scrutinize the need of new constitutional reforms aimed at further improving the governance system and increasing transparency and accountability. The judicial reform agenda remains an ongoing priority for the Government.

The Armenian government, in close collaboration with its international partners, has been working recently towards

enhancing the institutional capacity of the Independent Bar Association, improving the quality of legal education, fostering an effective environment for human rights protection, and increasing the judiciary's knowledge of international courts including the European Court of Human Rights.

In closing, I would like to underline Armenia's determination to closely work with other member states and international organizations for the sake of the common goal of further enhancing the rule of law.

I thank you.