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THE UN @ 75: INTERNATIONAL LAW AND THE FUTURE WE WANT

INTERNATIONAL LAW DAY 2020

MONDAY, 26 OCTOBER 2020, AT 10:00 (NY TIME)

**STATEMENT OF THE UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR LEGAL AFFAIRS AND
UNITED NATIONS LEGAL C**

It is undebated that international law has played a pivotal role in creating this stable international order and better standards of life. International law figures prominently in the purposes of the United Nations. As Article 1 of the Charter highlights, principles of justice and international law are decisive in preventing breaches to the peace, developing friendly relations among States, and achieving international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character.

Nonetheless, it should not be forgotten that the Dumbarton Oaks Proposals for the Establishment of a General International Organization did not give a prominent place to international law. The only reference was in a paragraph that was intended to prevent the application of international law in the case of "domestic questions". The prominence that international law has in the Charter today is the result of amendments during the San Francisco Conference. More importantly, this prominence results from the development of international law into a framework that has allowed us to ensure and work towards peace and prosperity over the past 75 years. As the Secretary-General noted during the ceremony marking the 75th anniversary of the United Nations, the progressive development of international law is one of its historic accomplishments.

The Secretary-General's remarks illustrate that the United Nations has played a critical role in the development of international law. In fact, I consider the United Nations to be at the centre of international law-making. The vital instruments that form the architecture of the international legal order were all drafted and adopted within the framework of the United Nations. Many of those instruments were prepared by the International Law Commission and finalized by the Sixth Committee and multilateral conferences convened under the auspices of the United Nations.

Today

law architecture. They continue to be refined by the International Law Commission

in the making of international law and its implementation. The Secretariat has been at the forefront of the evolution of international law. One striking example is the concept of peacekeeping, which was elaborated by the second Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld during the 1956 Suez crisis. Nowadays, peacekeeping operations are an indispensable part of the Organization's functions, even though they are not mentioned in the Charter. By recognizing the United Nations' international legal personality in the *Reparations for Injuries* advisory opinion, the International Court of Justice paved the way for the United Nations' contribution to international law-making and implementation. The newly established Court thus showed

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chapter is yet to be written. Thanks to the United Nations and its many organs and subsidiary