

Statement

by

Lebanon

at the sixth committee

Agenda Item 84:

"The rule of law at the national and international" levels

New York, October 1, 2024

Check against delivery

Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations

Mr. Chair,

Nowhere is the moral hemiplegia more evident than in the plight of our people in my region

Nowhere is the selective outrage more glaring than in response to the horrific crimes being committed against our people.

In the past year—and even more starkly in recent weeks—the façade has finally fallen away.

My region has become the deathbed of international law.

The core tenets of human dignity and justice have been distorted, manipulated, or entirely disregarded.

Massacres are being carried out in broad daylight, while those who routinely preach the universality of rules have fallen silent.

And when they do speak, it is often with empty expressions of concern, if not outright complicity.

This inaction, complacency, and silence have fostered a culture of impunity, where it is the law of might, not the rule of law, that prevails.

It emboldens the perpetrator to continue their killing spree.

What does this look like in practice?

A few recent examples from Lebanon:

We have reached a point where the Israeli Prime Minister can casually threaten to bring destruction upon Lebanon.

We have reached a point where an entire village has been wiped out by an Israeli bombing.

We have reached a point where Israeli soldiers boast openly about looting properties in Lebanon.

We have reached a point where no one and no place is safe.

We have reached a point where it now seems acceptable, even reasonable in the eyes of some to directly target civilians and cause forcible displacement.

The United Nations itself is under attack. Its officials are vilified, agencies providing essential aid are being shut down, and now its peacekeepers are deliberately targeted. UNIFIL troops in Lebanon have become part of Israel's campaign of aggression. No witnesses are needed for this destruction.

And how could it be any different when the perpetrators have always been exempt from the law, always been shielded from the application of the law?

Mr. Chair,

The sub-topic for this year, full, equal, and equitable participation at all levels in the international legal system entails the respect and application of the law for all, without exception.

This includes the protection of all civilians. It also entails the protection of women, who are being targeted and forcibly displaced. Likewise, children, who deserve special protection, are among the most vulnerable, with 400,000 of them displaced.

Mr. Chair,

This assault on the UN Charter, on human rights law, on International Humanitarian Law, on UN resolutions, on ICJ rulings, is an assault on the very norms and values that some of us are still trying to defend.

Yes, the multilateral edifice has its cracks.
Yes, it is far from being flawless.

We can speak to it, and we are witnessing it.

Yet, to many of us, we turn to the UN, its Charter, to international law as a shield of protection for humanity and legality.

Fulfilling existing obligations under international law is the only just and viable path forward.

It is the partial adherence to rules that has led to today's atrocities. What we are seeing, on the ground, are the consequences of ignoring and breaching these rules.

Invoking international law only for the benefit of a few, at the expense of others, is ultimately detrimental to all.

As the saying goes: Dieu se rit de ceux qui déplorent les effets dont ils continuent de chérir les causes.