



**STATEMENT BY MR MARK SEAH,
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF SINGAPORE,
ON AGENDA ITEM 83, ON THE RULE OF LAW AT THE NATIONAL
AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS,
SIXTH COMMITTEE,
17 OCTOBER 2023**

Mr Chair,

1 I wish, at the outset, to reaffirm unwavering support for the rule of law at the national and international levels. The rule of law is an existential matter for small States like Singapore.

the Secretary-General under this agenda item. The Philippines, on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, had earlier made important remarks on the report, which my delegation fully aligns with. My delegation objects to the inclusion of paragraph 89 of the report, which reads as follows: The United Nations continued to promote the universal abolition of the death penalty, including by encouraging the establishment of moratoriums.

3 Paragraph 89 is irrelevant, and its inclusion was improper. First, the use of the death penalty in itself is not a rule of law issue. Portraying this otherwise is wrong, disingenuous and unacceptable. The use of the death penalty *per se* neither undermines nor is contrary to the rule of law. All countries have the sovereign right to develop their own legal systems, including determining the legal penalties most suitable for their respective circumstances, in accordance with their international law obligations. This sovereign right was reaffirmed by the General Assembly in operative paragraph 1 of its resolutions 71/187, 73/175, 75/183 and 77/222 entitled Second, by including paragraph 89

