GENERAL ASSEMBLY SIXTH COMMITTEE
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GLOBAL MODEL UN NEW YORK 2027

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

STRENGTHENING THE RULE OF LAW

Simulation: General Assembly Sixth Committee

Welcome to Global Model UN New York 2027,

We are very pleased to introduce you to the most authentic simulation of the General Assembly Sixth Committee in the world; and hope to contribute to your understanding of the organisation, its mandate, and its critical role in global affairs.

Through a series of pre-conference webinars that will be offered and documents – like this resource guide – we aim to educate you not only about the global issues on the UN agenda, but also about the ways and means through which those topics are discussed, debated and negotiated by real UN diplomats.

This resource guide will provide you with a head start in doing research to gain a deeper understanding of the global issue that you will be discussing and the actions that the government you have been assigned recommends that the international community should take to address this issue. To make the research process a bit easier, the resource guide has been divided into sections and sub-sections to assist you in researching these two components. We strongly recommend you to give a careful look through the sources listed below so that the interaction with your peers is as exciting as possible.

We wish you all the very best in this journey of learning!

TOPIC DESCRIPTION

The rule of law is a principle of governance that requires everyone, including governments and public officials, to be held accountable under laws that are publicly known, applied equally, enforced fairly and consistent with human rights. At the national level, this means that government officials cannot exercise power without legal limits and that people must have ways to challenge unlawful decisions and obtain justice. At the international level, it means that States must respect their obligations under international law and settle disputes through peaceful means rather than the threat or use of force.

The General Assembly's Sixth Committee examines how the rule of law can be strengthened at both levels. The Secretary-General's report A/81/184 describes UN activities undertaken between July 2025 and June 2026. A central concern is the difference between establishing legal rules and institutions and ensuring that they function effectively. A country may adopt laws protecting human rights, for example, but those protections have limited value if courts cannot enforce them or public officials can violate them without consequences.

At the national level, strengthening the rule of law requires justice institutions that are independent, fair and accessible. Police must investigate crimes lawfully, prosecutors must handle cases fairly, courts must decide cases without improper interference, and people accused of crimes must receive fair trials. Governments must also address barriers faced by people who cannot afford legal assistance or have difficulty accessing courts. Other challenges include combating corruption, recovering stolen public funds, preventing organized crime and terrorism, and ensuring that law-enforcement measures respect human rights.

These requirements become especially difficult when institutions are weakened by armed conflict or serious political instability. Courts may be unable to operate, evidence may be destroyed, and victims may have little opportunity to seek justice. Strengthening the rule of law in these circumstances can involve investigating war crimes, preserving evidence, prosecuting those responsible, providing reparations to victims and rebuilding institutions capable of preventing future abuses. International courts and investigative mechanisms may also contribute to accountability when national systems cannot adequately address serious violations.

TOPIC DESCRIPTION

At the international level, the rule of law depends on States respecting treaties and other international legal obligations. The International Court of Justice helps settle legal disputes between States when it has jurisdiction, while the International Law Commission helps clarify existing international law and develop proposals for new legal rules. The challenge is not only to develop international agreements but also to ensure that States implement and comply with their obligations.

The rule of law also places limits on how governments exercise political power. Constitutions establish the powers and responsibilities of government institutions, while public participation can give people opportunities to influence constitutional reforms and laws that affect their rights. Environmental laws similarly require governments and businesses to comply with legal protections against environmental harm. Across these areas, the central challenge for Member States is to identify practical measures that make legal protections effective, strengthen accountability and ensure that commitments are respected in practice.

Key Points and Main Issues

1. Justice institutions must function fairly, not simply exist

New courts, digital filing systems and judicial training can increase capacity, but they must also produce timely and fair decisions.

Key issues include:

- Judges must be able to decide cases without political pressure or interference from other powerful interests.
- Large case backlogs and prolonged pretrial detention can deny people timely hearings and undermine fair-trial rights.
- Legal aid, safe prison conditions and reliable information about case outcomes are necessary to assess whether justice institutions protect people's rights.

Recommended Actions

- Help courts improve case management and publish information about delays while protecting confidential information and ensuring that people without internet access can still use court services.
- Measure whether cases are resolved fairly and promptly, defendants receive legal representation, and court decisions are implemented, rather than counting only buildings constructed or officials trained.

Key Points and Main Issues

2. Access to justice must include people facing particular barriers

Rights mean little if people cannot obtain documents, reach a court, understand proceedings or afford legal help.

Key issues include:

- Women and girls, children, refugees, displaced persons and persons with disabilities may face different legal, financial and practical barriers to obtaining justice.
- People living in rural areas may have difficulty reaching courts, while language differences and unfamiliar legal procedures can prevent them from understanding or using available services.
- Children and victims of violence may need additional protections so that seeking justice does not expose them to intimidation, further harm or unfair treatment.

Recommended Actions

- Expand legal aid, interpretation, accessible court facilities and mobile services where evidence shows that particular communities cannot obtain justice.
- Adapt procedures to protect children and victims of violence while preserving the rights of accused persons to a fair trial.

Key Points and Main Issues

3. Corruption and financial crime require enforcement and safeguards

Anti-corruption laws need investigators, evidence, independent prosecutors and effective international cooperation.

Key issues include:

- Corruption in public procurement and government decision-making can divert public resources and weaken confidence that officials are subject to the same rules as everyone else.
- Authorities often need to trace, freeze and recover assets that have been transferred abroad, which requires cooperation between countries.
- Requests for bank records and other financial evidence must follow lawful procedures and protect the rights of people under investigation.

Recommended Actions

- Strengthen independent financial investigations and create secure channels through which people can report suspected corruption without retaliation.
- Establish procedures for lawful cross-border exchange of financial evidence and assess results through completed investigations, fair prosecutions and assets lawfully recovered.

Key Points and Main Issues

4. Organized crime and terrorism cross national borders

Trafficking, smuggling, drug crime and terrorist activity often involve evidence and suspects in more than one jurisdiction.

Key issues include:

- Trafficking networks and other organized criminal groups may operate in several countries, requiring police and prosecutors to request evidence and assistance from foreign authorities.
- Criminal activity conducted through digital technologies can complicate investigations when evidence is stored abroad or countries apply different rules for obtaining it.
- Measures against terrorism must protect public safety without permitting arbitrary detention, discrimination or other violations of human rights.

Recommended Actions

- Specify what evidence and expertise police, prosecutors and other authorities may exchange, and require safeguards for privacy, fair trials and the lawful use of information.
- Strengthen cooperation among police, prosecutors, customs officials and courts so that cross-border investigations can lead to lawful and effective proceedings.

Key Points and Main Issues

5. Serious crimes require accountability and victim-centred justice

After conflict, trials may be delayed, evidence lost and institutions damaged; justice may also require reparations and institutional reform.

Key issues include:

- War crimes and crimes against humanity may be difficult to prosecute when courts are damaged, witnesses are threatened or suspects remain outside the country where crimes occurred.
- Evidence of serious violations must be collected and preserved carefully so that it can be used in future proceedings that meet fair-trial standards.
- Victims may seek truth, reparations and guarantees that abuses will not recur, in addition to criminal prosecutions.

Recommended Actions

- Support impartial investigations, witness protection and secure preservation of evidence that can be used by courts with lawful jurisdiction.
- Combine appropriate criminal accountability with reparations and institutional reforms that address the causes of past abuses and help prevent their recurrence.

Key Points and Main Issues

6. International legal rules must be clarified and implemented

The International Law Commission studies existing rules and proposes developments, while States debate and negotiate their legal obligations.

Key issues include:

- The International Law Commission must distinguish rules that already form part of international law from proposals intended to develop new rules.
- Signing a treaty does not ordinarily make a State fully bound by all its provisions; delegates must distinguish signature, ratification, entry into force and implementation.
- Differences in national legal traditions and State practice can affect whether governments agree that a proposed rule reflects existing international law.

Recommended Actions

- When considering a draft international rule, identify whether it describes an existing legal obligation or proposes a new one requiring further agreement.
- Identify the national laws, administrative measures and reporting arrangements that a country would need to adopt to implement a treaty obligation effectively.

Key Points and Main Issues

7. Peaceful settlement depends on legal procedures and State cooperation

Negotiation, mediation, arbitration and international courts provide different ways to address disputes without force.

Key issues include:

- States may disagree about which peaceful dispute-settlement procedure to use and whether an international court has jurisdiction to decide their dispute.
- The International Court of Justice decides legal disputes between States when it has jurisdiction and may also issue advisory opinions when authorized UN organs or agencies request them.
- Even after an international court delivers a judgment, practical implementation may require further decisions and cooperation by the States concerned.

Recommended Actions

- Examine which peaceful procedures are available for a particular dispute and what legal or political obstacles may prevent States from using them.
- Consider how States can implement international judgments and meet their legal obligations through concrete changes in policy or practice.

Key Points and Main Issues

8. International accountability mechanisms have different mandates

International courts and investigative mechanisms perform different functions; collecting evidence does not itself amount to a trial or conviction.

Key issues include:

- The International Criminal Court prosecutes individuals for crimes within its jurisdiction, whereas the International Court of Justice addresses legal disputes between States.
- International investigative mechanisms concerning situations such as Syria and Myanmar can collect and preserve evidence, but they do not themselves conduct criminal trials.
- International investigations and prosecutions may depend on cooperation from national authorities to obtain documents, protect witnesses and bring suspects before a competent court.

Recommended Actions

- Before recommending changes to an international institution, determine what its existing legal mandate allows it to investigate, decide or prosecute.
- Support lawful evidence collection, witness protection and cooperation with national or international courts that have jurisdiction over the alleged crimes.

Key Points and Main Issues

9. Constitutional and environmental rule of law extend beyond criminal justice

The rule of law also shapes government powers, public participation and enforcement of environmental standards.

Key issues include:

- Constitutions establish the powers of government institutions and can provide safeguards against officials exercising authority beyond the limits of the law.
- Public consultations on constitutional reform are meaningful only when people can participate safely and their views can genuinely inform decisions.
- Environmental protections may remain ineffective when authorities lack inspectors, reliable information or procedures through which affected people can seek remedies.

Recommended Actions

- Design constitutional consultations that reach different communities, explain the proposals clearly and show how public contributions were considered.
- Link environmental laws to effective inspections, accessible information and legal procedures through which violations can be challenged and remedies obtained.

Key Points and Main Issues

10. UN assistance should be coordinated and evaluated by outcomes

Different parts of a justice system depend on one another; assistance is most useful when national authorities and UN entities pursue compatible goals.

Key issues include:

- The UN Global Focal Point for the Rule of Law helps coordinate assistance provided by different UN entities in countries receiving support.
- National authorities must determine their own priorities and responsibilities so that international assistance supports rather than replaces domestic institutions.
- Counting training sessions or new facilities does not establish whether assistance has improved fairness, access to justice or accountability.

Recommended Actions

- Agree with national institutions on shared priorities, responsibilities and practical procedures for coordinating UN-supported activities.
- Assess whether assistance has improved people's experience of justice, including the fairness and timeliness of proceedings and access for communities that previously faced barriers.

Key Points and Main Issues

Central Questions for Delegates

- How can Member States strengthen justice institutions and improve access to justice? What forms of international cooperation and UN assistance would help countries ensure that courts operate independently, cases are heard without unnecessary delays, legal aid is available to people who cannot afford it, and individuals receive fair treatment regardless of their circumstances?
- How can countries cooperate more effectively to combat corruption, financial crime and organized crime? What measures would help governments trace and recover stolen assets, exchange evidence across borders and prosecute criminal networks while ensuring that suspects receive fair trials, have access to legal representation and are protected against arbitrary detention?
- How can Member States strengthen international cooperation against terrorism while respecting human rights and the rule of law? What safeguards should apply to counter-terrorism investigations and prosecutions, including judicial oversight of surveillance, protection against torture, access to defence lawyers and the right to challenge detention before a court?
- What measures should Member States support to strengthen accountability for war crimes and other serious violations of international law? How can national courts, international courts and investigative mechanisms cooperate to preserve evidence, investigate alleged crimes, prosecute those responsible and provide justice and reparations to victims?
- How can Member States strengthen respect for international law and compliance with treaty obligations? What role should the Sixth Committee, the International Law Commission and UN technical assistance play in helping countries develop international legal rules, incorporate treaty obligations into national legislation and ensure that those obligations are implemented?

Key Points and Main Issues

- How can countries strengthen the peaceful settlement of international disputes? What measures could encourage greater use of negotiation, mediation, arbitration and the International Court of Justice, and how can Member States promote compliance with international judicial decisions?
- How can the UN help countries ensure that legal protections are meaningful for people who face particular barriers to justice? What assistance would help governments protect refugees, displaced persons, children, victims of trafficking and people who cannot afford legal representation, while respecting differences in national legal systems?
- How can Member States strengthen the rule of law in constitutional governance and environmental protection? What measures could help ensure that constitutional reforms involve meaningful public participation, government officials exercise their powers within legal limits, and environmental laws are enforced rather than merely adopted?
- How should Member States measure whether reforms intended to strengthen the rule of law are actually working? Beyond counting new courts, trained judges, digital justice systems or adopted laws, what evidence should be collected to determine whether cases are resolved more quickly, judicial decisions are fair and independent, people can obtain legal assistance, corruption is reduced and public confidence in justice institutions improves?
- How can Member States improve the coordination and effectiveness of UN assistance for strengthening the rule of law? How should the UN, national governments and other partners establish priorities, coordinate assistance to different justice institutions, assess results and ensure that improvements continue after international assistance ends?

General and Thematic Resources

Strengthening and coordinating United Nations rule of law activities — Secretary-General (A/81/184) 2026

Principal study-guide report. Reviews national and international rule-of-law assistance, accountability, international law and UN coordination in July 2025–June 2026.

Relevant issues: 1–10

Sixth Committee: The rule of law at the national and international levels — 81st session 2026

Official 2026 meeting record and links to current interventions; use to identify positions actually presented in the Sixth Committee.

Relevant issues: 6–10

The rule of law at the national and international levels — General Assembly resolution A/RES/80/167 2025

Most recent resolution in the draft; sets out the General Assembly's agreed approach and the framework for further consideration.

Relevant issues: 6–10

General and Thematic Resources (cont.)

Strengthening and coordinating United Nations rule of law activities — Secretary-General (A/80/99) — 2025

Earlier reporting period for comparing developments and whether the same implementation problems recur.

Relevant issues: 1–10

Sixth Committee: The rule of law at the national and international levels — 80th session — 2025

Official meeting page identifying country and group statements from the 2025 debate.

Relevant issues: 6–10

Corruption and trafficking in persons — UNODC — 2025

Explains how corruption can facilitate trafficking and points to practical opportunities for law enforcement and anti-corruption cooperation.

Relevant issues: 3–4

Strengthening and coordinating United Nations rule of law activities — Secretary-General (A/79/117) — 2024

Comparative annual report for tracking UN support and identifying persistent national and international challenges.

Relevant issues: 1–10

OFFICIAL UN RESOURCES ON THE TOPIC (CONT.)

General and Thematic Resources (cont.)

Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2024 — UNODC — 2024

Global evidence on identified trafficking cases, victims and justice responses; useful for cross-border crime and protection questions.

Relevant issues: 2, 4

Toolkit for Responsible AI Innovation in Law Enforcement — UNICRI and INTERPOL — 2024

Joint publication addressing legal and human-rights risks when law-enforcement agencies develop or use AI. UNICRI co-authorship places this in UN resources.

Relevant issues: 1, 4

New Vision of the Secretary-General for the Rule of Law (A/75/982) — 2023

Foundational strategic framework for people-centred rule-of-law assistance and UN coordination; retained despite the document-symbol year because the New Vision was issued in 2023.

Relevant issues: 1, 2, 10

International Law Commission — official programme and reports — Current reference

Primary UN portal for Commission reports and draft texts. Consult the dated annual report relevant to the question; the portal itself is a continuing resource.

Relevant issues: 6

General and Thematic Resources (cont.)

International Court of Justice — cases and advisory opinions

Current reference

Primary source for cases, judgments and advisory opinions; distinguish contentious cases from advisory proceedings.

Relevant issues: 7

UN Global Focal Point for the Rule of Law

Current reference

UN coordination mechanism for justice, police and corrections assistance in crisis and post-conflict settings.

Relevant issues: 10

African Group

Cameroon — statement on behalf of the African Group, Sixth Committee

2025

Official UN record of the 2025 group intervention; consult the statement itself for the African Group's common position.

Relevant issues: 6–10

Ghana — Permanent Mission statement on rule of law

2024

Government-hosted 2024 intervention; use as a historical comparison, checking the speaker and the capacity in which the statement was delivered.

Relevant issues: 6–7

Asia-Pacific Group

India — Sixth Committee statement on the rule of law — 2025

National perspective on judicial institutions, equality before the law and domestic reforms.

Relevant issues: 1, 2, 6

Japan — Foreign Minister's Security Council statement on the rule of law — 2023

Government statement emphasizing international law, peaceful dispute settlement and cooperation.

Relevant issues: 6–7

China — Permanent Mission remarks on rule of law and international peace — 2023

Government perspective on Charter principles, sovereign equality and the international legal order.

Relevant issues: 6–7

Latin America and the Caribbean Group

Brazil — Sixth Committee statement on the rule of law

2025

Government position on multilateralism, international obligations and respect for the UN Charter.

Relevant issues: 6–7

Western Europe and Other States Group

Canada — statement on behalf of Canada, Australia and New Zealand, Sixth Committee

2025

Official UN record identifies the joint 2025 intervention; examine the statement for shared priorities.

Relevant issues: 1, 6–7

Eastern Europe Group

Romania — Sixth Committee rule-of-law intervention 2025

Official 2025 record identifies Romania among participating States; retrieve the individual intervention to establish its position.

Relevant issues: 6–7

European Commission — 2026 Rule of Law Report

2026

Reviews justice systems, corruption, media pluralism and institutional checks and balances across EU Member States and selected enlargement countries.

Relevant issues: 1, 3, 9

European Union — Sixth Committee statement on rule of law

2025

Official EU delegation statement addressing international legal obligations and national and international rule-of-law challenges.

Relevant issues: 6–7

African Group — 2025 Sixth Committee intervention

2025

Official 2025 UN proceedings identify Cameroon as the speaker for the African Group; follow the meeting page to the group's statement.

Relevant issues: 6–10

ASEAN — 2025 Sixth Committee intervention

2025

Official UN proceedings identify the Philippines speaking on behalf of ASEAN in the rule-of-law debate.

Relevant issues: 6–7

CELAC — 2025 Sixth Committee group position

2025

Consult the official 2025 Sixth Committee records for Latin American and Caribbean interventions; compare with the dated 2024 CELAC statement below.

Relevant issues: 6–7

Venice Commission — Updated Rule of Law Checklist

2025

Council of Europe expert guidance on legality, judicial independence, safeguards against abuse of power and access to justice.

Relevant issues: 1, 9

World Bank — The Path to People-Centred Justice in Kenya: A JUPITER Assessment

2025

Examines actual experiences and performance of justice services in Kenya; issued by the World Bank, not the Kenyan government.

Relevant issues: 1–2, 10

African Group — Sixth Committee intervention

2024

2024 UN meeting record identifies Uganda speaking for the African Group. Useful for comparison with 2025 priorities.

Relevant issues: 6–10

ASEAN — statement on rule of law at the Sixth Committee — 2024

Regional position delivered by Singapore on behalf of ASEAN.

Relevant issues: 6–7

CELAC — statement on the rule of law at the Sixth Committee — 2024

Regional group statement emphasizing sovereignty, peaceful dispute settlement and international cooperation.

Relevant issues: 6–7

OECD — Government at a Glance 2023 — 2023

Comparative evidence on government performance, public trust, integrity and judicial or governance indicators.

Relevant issues: 1, 3, 10

NON-OFFICIAL RESOURCES ON THE TOPIC

World Justice Project — Rule of Law Index 2025 — 2025

Independent comparative index covering 143 countries and jurisdictions across eight dimensions, including corruption, fundamental rights, civil justice and criminal justice. Use the methodology and country profiles, not rankings alone.

Relevant issues: 1–3, 9–10

Callais and Mkrtchian — Court-packing and judicial manipulation — 2024

Research on how political interference with courts can affect judicial independence and accountability.

Relevant issues: 1, 9

Hogic — Pre-enlargement Reform Failures in the Western Balkans — 2024

Study of why formal judicial and governance reforms do not always yield improvements in practice.

Relevant issues: 1, 3, 10

ALIGNER — Ensuring Fundamental Rights Compliance and Trustworthiness of Law Enforcement AI Systems — 2024

Research on fundamental-rights assessments for police uses of AI, including surveillance and automated risk assessments.

Relevant issues: 1, 4

Hayo and Voigt — Judicial independence: Why does de facto diverge from de jure?

2023

Research distinguishing legal guarantees of judicial independence from independence experienced in practice.

Relevant issues: 1, 9

How Delegates Should Use These Sources

- Start with A/81/184 and the latest General Assembly resolution. Identify the problems and the measures already undertaken; distinguish reported activities from proven results.
- Use the Key Points and Main Issues to select two or three priorities for your country. Identify which institutions have authority to act and what specific help they may need.
- Read your own government's current statements, laws and policies before inferring a national position. Statements by a regional group should be used to supplement a Member State's position and where it is difficult to find primary sources of a Member State's position, the statement by a regional or political group that your assigned countrybelongs can give you insights into your country's positiong since they are typically aligned.
- Compare government positions with independent evidence and official UN reporting. Distinguish adopted laws, ratified treaties, opened courts, completed cases and measured improvements.
- When proposing international cooperation, identify the UN body or legal mechanism, the responsibilities of Member States, the human-rights safeguards and the evidence that would show progress.
- Check publication dates and document symbols. A country or group may have changed its position since an older statement. The 2025 World Justice Project index is the latest edition available as of 17 October 2026.
- Use the five UN regional groups—African Group, Asia-Pacific Group, Latin America and the Caribbean Group, Western Europe and Other States Group, and Eastern Europe Group—when comparing geographic representation; these are not the same as WHO regions.