

THE IMPORTANCE OF MULTILATERALISM AND THE PRIMACY OF INTERNATIONAL LAW

1 - The Characterization of Modern International Relations:

International relations has evolved more in the last 60 years that followed the previous two World Wars than in all of human history before that. This was due to the unprecedented intensification of global relationships in all areas of life. Commercial trade, financial flows, and the movement of peoples reached heights that had never been reached before. Trade boundaries between nations had never been so blurred and economic interdependence so accentuated.

This close relationship between all the peoples of the world is due to the progress made in information and communication technologies, international transport, mass tourism, multiculturalism, and other factors.

2- From Unilateral to Multilateral Decisions

In a world with such characteristics, decisions on international relations could not remain as they were before the World Wars. Today, humanity cannot be dependent on decisions from one state -- however powerful that state may be. Unilateral decision-making of a dictatorial or imperial nature of bygone eras must cease to exist and give way to the multilateral and democratic decision-making of the modern era.

3- The Role of International Law

The role of the multilateral decision-making bodies of the United Nations, regional organizations, and non-governmental organizations from civil society, based on international law, is absolutely indispensable to guaranteeing a balance and justice in today's global relationships.

In this international context, the more powerful a State is, the greater is its international political, diplomatic, economic, financial, and migratory responsibilities. This responsibility stems from the extent of influence that the most powerful countries are able to wield over other countries. What is decided in the U.S., or China, or Europe, or Japan, or in any other powerful country has repercussions of a global scale. No country that wields such influence has the right to unilaterally decide on matter that affect existing global balance because in so doing it would be undermining the very principles of international law that govern relations between nations today.

4- Building Trust, Enabling International Trust

The United Nations' High-Level Conference on international settlement agreements resulting from mediation, held in this beautiful city-state Singapore, provides us with an opportunity to reaffirm the rule of justice and international law and restore confidence in international trade. Angola supports this initiative unconditionally, throwing its weight behind that of all other countries in advocating for mediation and multilateralism in international disputes.

Thank you very much.

Francisco Queiroz,
Minister of Justice and Human Rights