



PHILIPPINES

STATEMENT

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Item 84: The Rule of Law at the National and International Levels
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Thank you, Mr. Chair.

We subscribe to the statements of the Non-Aligned Movement delivered by Iran and of ASEAN delivered by Cambodia.

We agree with the Secretary-General: the rule of law at the national and international levels is not only critical, but essential in building and keeping the peace, to prevent conflict and thereby sustain the most congenial climate for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

At the national level the rule of law is an instrument of justice and the precondition of inclusive development. A slave economies, such as colonialism, is an economic development exclusively to the benefit of the masters. Injustice is a development no one welcomes. The UN plays a key role in encouraging the rule of law by supporting capacity building and the exchange of best practices at the national level. The report documents key examples in developing countries.

On the other hand, international law is the great equalizer among States, giving voice to all nations with equal resonance - regardless of political, economic and military size. Anchored in the multilateral treaty system, international law seeks to bind the community of nations and prevent anarchy in the global order - without subjugation and submission, which create order but not the kind we have in mind.

The vision of the UN Charter remains as relevant as it is eloquent since the conclusion of the San Francisco conference in 1945, where the Philippines was present - that is, these united nations are the best achievement, and the best hope, for the rule of law at the international level.

In previous years, we shared each other's comprehensive legal framework on access to justice for all including for the poorest and most vulnerable, and our best

national practices in the implementation of multilateral treaties. This year, we are brainstorming the "ways and means to further disseminate international law to strengthen the rule of law".

Mr. Chair, before I proceed, let us recall our landmark Declaration on the Rule of Law on both levels which we adopted five years ago. The Declaration recognizes that across the UN system, we have institutions, working methods and relationships to make the rule of law relevant to peace and security, human rights and development.

We reaffirm our support for the Declaration. It contains priority elements, ranging from the peaceful settlement of disputes to the role of international tribunals, from anti-terrorism to anti-corruption priorities, from sovereign equality to gender equality.

The 1982 Manila Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes is the authoritative articulation of our collective duty under the UN Charter to peacefully resolve disputes.

The Declaration highlights stronger international cooperation to dismantle illicit networks, and counter the world drug problem, as well as suppress transnational organized crime - including money-laundering, trafficking in persons, trafficking in arms and other forms of organized crime - all of which threaten human rights, the security of societies and nations, and undermine sustainable development by flouting the rule of law.

International law is equally essential to the rule of law at the national level. One protects the other, even as the other informs the first to make it practical. How, then, can we further disseminate international law to strengthen the rule of law over all?

At the national level, international law is important for norm and standard-setting, access to and delivery of justice, and the protection of human rights which are threatened as much by aggression abroad as by oppression at home. International law confers universality to national law and makes it intellectually and morally compelling. In the same way, national law pulls international law down to reality so it is effective and meaningful.

The culture of the rule of law should be encouraged at the formative stage so it is internalized. Law abidingness is not a basic instinct; it is lawlessness that is that. Law abidingness is an acquired taste. Schoolchildren should be introduced to the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

This moral formation should continue throughout the educational system with increasingly complex subjects that impressionable students could relate with, like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the rights of marginalized sectors, and international humanitarian law.

Law schools should offer more specialized subjects of international law, like Law of the Sea, international criminal law and trade law. Academe, law firms and government should support regional cooperation on international law, including the UN regional courses on international law.

There is also great potential at the international level. For one, delegations to UNCITRAL meetings should consider including private lawyers in their national delegations. It will enlarge their repertoire of legal techniques and enrich domestic jurisprudence.

We must encourage the establishment of international law societies among academics and non-academics alike, whether or not they are lawyers.

Capacity building in international law is also key. Exchanges of experience and best practices among judges and police and security officials in the law of counterterrorism has had practical benefits.

Finally, the UN should spotlight one key multilateral treaty at each UN high level week, and establish as a tradition, a signing ceremony like the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons last month and the Paris Agreement last year.

We thank other delegations for their contributions to this debate, and we eagerly await their suggestions on moving forward. We hope to enhance greater coordination among UN entities in parlaying the rule of law to support the three pillars of the UN and the 2030 Agenda.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.