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Statement

by

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Ambassador and Permanent Representative
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**before the Sixth Committee
of the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly**

**Agenda Item 84:
The rule of law at the national and international levels
New York, 4/5 October 2017**

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Mr. Chairman,

The Kingdom of Thailand aligns itself with the statements delivered by the distinguished representatives of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Kingdom of Cambodia on behalf of ASEAN.

We thank the Secretary-General for his reports.

Mr. Chairman,

The rule of law is crucial to the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 16. As the SDGs focus on people, so must the rule of law, which concerns people's everyday life – not just those in the legal and justice professions, but all ordinary people. For the rule of law to truly serve the people, it must be upheld first and foremost by the people themselves. It is, therefore, necessary for all of us to step up efforts to promote understanding of the rule of law and ensure that it is translated into practice both domestically and on the international level.

In this perspective, dissemination of knowledge in international law to the people becomes key in promoting the rule of law. We commend the UN for its extensive work in this regard, which in the long run will certainly pay off as these people will help advance the rule of law through their works and make positive changes on the ground.

With this conviction, the Kingdom of Thailand has been working over the years to support the UN in disseminating international law to the people. To date, we have co-hosted four UN Regional Courses in International Law for Asia-Pacific. We will co-host the next one in November this year, and stands ready to further this excellent collaboration with the Codification Division. Programmes like these have been helpful for government officials, non-state actors and individuals alike in fostering a thorough understanding of international law. We hope that they will continue to receive regular and adequate funding from the UN.

Codification and progressive development of international law is another key area in which the UN has played an exemplary role in support of the rule of law. This process, inter alia, helps ensure that there is a clear and common understanding among the peoples on the scope and content of the positive law. Many diplomatic or intergovernmental conferences have successfully been convened under the auspices of the UN, leading to the birth of many important treaties. The latest demonstration of this success is the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which the Kingdom of Thailand signed and ratified on 20 September this year.

Mr. Chairman,

In the present international legal context, the rule of law can do a lot more to serve the people. In particular, it can ensure equal opportunities for all – thus uplift the welfare of the people - and protect persons against violation of basic rights. It is important that we intensify our common efforts to ensure the rule of law for those who are often marginalized or are in vulnerable situations, including women and children, older persons, persons with disabilities, or persons under custody.

The Bangkok Rules is a concrete example of this reach out to those who may be left furthest behind in a society. Initiated by Her Royal Highness Princess Bajrakitiyabha of Thailand, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Goodwill Ambassador for the Rule of Law in Southeast Asia, and endorsed by the UN General Assembly in 2010, these rules aim at ensuring due process of law and fair and humane treatment for women under custody, while providing ways to help them make a living and integrate into society thereafter.

On civil matters, the rule of law is the best tool to ensure security and predictability in the relationship among people leaving in different countries, be it personal, business or social. Thailand acknowledges the critical role of the UN Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) and the Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH), among others, in supporting the advancement of the rule of law in this regard.

On the other hand, the rule of law can also ensure accountability for any offences committed by an individual, in particular any violation of international law on human rights or international humanitarian law. The Kingdom of Thailand firmly believes in upholding the rule of law in any situation, and to demonstrate our support for this just cause, recently made a voluntary contribution to the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism (IIIM) set up under UNGA resolution 71/248 adopted in December last year.

Mr. Chairman,

The Kingdom of Thailand reaffirms its continued commitment to promoting and ensuring the rule of law, which is at the core of our efforts to bring about a truly inclusive society through the achievements of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Thank you.
