

**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY AMBASSADOR
FREDERICK SHAVA PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE TO THE UNITED
NATIONS DURING THE DEBATE ON THE RULE OF
LAW: SIXTH COMMITTEE OCTOBER 2014.**

Mr. Chairman,

As this is my first time to speak in this Committee, I wish to congratulate you, Ambassador Manongi and your Bureau on being elected to preside over this Committee during this Session. I am confident that under your stewardship and leadership, the Committee will discharge its mandate in a diligent manner. My delegation aligns our statement with those delivered by Iran on behalf of the Non Aligned Movement and South Africa on behalf of the Africa Group.

Mr. Chairman,

The nexus between development, peace and security, human rights and the rule of law is inextricable. Zimbabwe firmly believes that the rule of law at international level is essential for global socio-economic development and the maintenance of international peace and security. The Charter of the United Nations is the fundamental bedrock of the rule of law. Relations between states should be guided by principles enshrined in the Charter, including the sovereign equality of states, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, non aggression, peaceful coexistence of states and respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of states. The UN should also continue to champion the cause of self determination so that all peoples who continue to live under occupation and subjugation are liberated to enjoy their full rights.

As agreed to in the Declaration on the Rule of Law at national and international level adopted by Heads of State and Government on 24 September 2012, States must refrain from the threat or use of force to solve disputes. The tendency to resort to force at the slightest excuse undermines development peace, security, human rights and the rule of law. There are ample recent experiences which demonstrate that heavy handed interventions do not always bring about sustainable solutions, but only cost more lives, destroy and degrade economic and social infrastructure and often leave behind more unstable situations than those they intended to resolve. More often than not, the weak and defenseless innocent civilians are left to pick up the pieces from a trail of destruction.

Mr. Chairman,

The Declaration on the Rule of Law also cautioned States to avoid the use of unilateral punitive sanctions and other measures against other States. Regrettably, such measures which are employed by powerful states against weaker ones to achieve narrow political objectives undermine stability and socio economic development efforts. My country and a number of other developing countries continue to suffer under such unjustified unilateral sanctions and measures. As we frame out the Post-2015 Development Agenda with a focus on eradicating poverty and transforming our economies, we hope that development country efforts will not continue to be hindered by these unilateral economic sanctions and other coercive measures.

Mr. Chairman,

Zimbabwe supports international efforts to end impunity and to hold those responsible for atrocities accountable. We are, however, concerned that the international criminal justice system has operated in a selective manner. The impression created is that it is only focused on soft targets in the developing world, mainly

Africa. These perceptions undermine confidence in the system. For the system to be credible, it has to be seen to apply universally and equally to all.

Mr. Chairman,

At national level, Zimbabwe is committed to the rule of law and good governance through strengthening accountability law, and justice institutions. Our new home grown Constitution has re-emphasized the separation of powers between the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary and the independence of the latter institutions has been enhanced

All laws are being realigned to be consistent with the new Constitution. Any laws that may not be in line with the Constitution are deemed in any case to be null and void. Zimbabwe has also set up independent bodies and Commissions such as the Zimbabwe Human Rights, the Anti-Corruption and Media Commissions to protect the rights and interests of citizens. These are just some of the measures taken to enhance the rule of law.

Zimbabwe welcomes the idea of sharing national practices in strengthening the rule of law and justice. We believe that the UN is one of the most appropriate forums for sharing best practices and capacity building through genuine cooperation. Zimbabwe is committed to cooperation based on mutual understanding and respect. As a small nation, we depend on the rule of law for protection against arbitrary actions by the rich and the powerful. We firmly believe that harmonious relations between states and national development can only be guaranteed through multilateralism, dialogue and cooperation in addressing differences between states, not force and coercion.

I thank you.