

STATEMENT OF THE PHILIPPINES

Item 83 – Report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization

Sixth Committee, 71st session of the United Nations General Assembly
Thursday, 13 October 2016

Thank you, Mr Chairman.

The Philippines aligns itself with the [Islamic Republic of Iran] for its statement on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Since its creation in 1975, the Special Committee has invaluable assisted Member States in making our Organization function more effectively, in order to better achieve its purposes under the Charter.

The very first purpose of the United Nations is to maintain international peace and security. To maintain international peace and security, all Member States are duty bound to settle their disputes by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law. The peaceful settlement of disputes is the condition *sine qua non* to maintaining international peace and security.

The Special Committee has contributed significantly to this overriding purpose, through the 1982 Manila Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes. The Manila Declaration is the first instrument adopted by the General Assembly as a result of the work of the Special Committee. This landmark declaration is the first comprehensive plan and consolidation of the legal framework for the peaceful settlement of international disputes, building upon the UN Charter in particular its Article 33, resolution 2625 of 1970 or the Friendly Relations Declaration, and general international law.

At our 67th session in 2012, the General Assembly, upon the recommendation of the Special Committee and eventually the Sixth Committee, welcomed the 30th anniversary of the Manila Declaration. The General Assembly recalled the Manila Declaration as a concrete accomplishment of the Special Committee, and reiterated the call to all States to observe and promote in good faith the Declaration in the peaceful settlement of their international disputes.

Mr Chairman, many delegations and the reports of the Secretary-General continue to cite the enduring importance of the Manila Declaration.

In this spirit, the Philippines recalls and reiterates its support for the proposal of the Non-Aligned Movement entitled "Pacific settlement of disputes and its impact on the maintenance of peace" and the proposal submitted by Ghana entitled "Working paper by Ghana on strengthening the relationship and cooperation between the United Nations and regional arrangements or agencies in the peaceful settlement of disputes".

We look forward to constructive engagement by interested delegations with a view to making substantive progress ahead of the next session of the Special Committee.

For our part, we believe that the UN Charter underscores the essential role of regional organizations or arrangements in the peaceful settlement of disputes and the maintenance of international peace and security, in support of the Security Council. Many regional organizations or arrangements certainly have a lot to contribute to this proposal. This could include the Association of Southeast Asian Nations or ASEAN, to which the Philippines belongs.

From the 1967 Bangkok Declaration, the 1976 Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, the 2008 ASEAN Charter creating the ASEAN Community last year, and a host of other key agreements, ASEAN has consolidated itself as an important regional organization that, *inter alia*, emphasizes centrality, upholds international law, and promotes regional peace and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

ASEAN will celebrate its 50th anniversary next year under the chairmanship of the Philippines. The peaceful resolution of disputes in accordance with the universally-recognized principles of international law, including the UN Convention of the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), is a specific priority for the Philippines' chairmanship.

The Philippines also supports the consideration by the Special Committee of the question of the implementation of the provisions of the UN Charter relating to assistance to third States affected by the application of sanctions under Chapter VII of the Charter, based on the relevant report of the Secretary-General.

Finally, we wish to highlight our association with the initiative of the Non-Aligned Movement to commemorate the 70th anniversary this year of the International Court of Justice and its important role as the principal judicial organ of the United Nations in the peaceful settlement of disputes and the development of international law. This fact was well recognized by the Manila Declaration.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.