



PHILIPPINES

STATEMENT

**Agenda 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, 72nd session of the United Nations General Assembly
Tuesday, 10 October 2017, United Nations Headquarters, New York**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Philippines aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The overriding purpose of the United Nations is to maintain international peace and security, without which human rights and development will be compromised. 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 a priority for the UN, the condition sine qua non to maintaining international peace and security.

Since its creation in 1975, the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization, has supported Member States desiring to make the UN function more effectively, in order to better achieve its purposes, specifically the maintenance of international peace and security, in accordance with the UN Charter.

The proposals and working papers submitted by the various delegations on important topics within the mandate of the Committee not only enrich its work, but attest to its strengths and value. This has been affirmed by the General Assembly in its resolution 71/146 on the report of the Committee, instructing us to continue considering these proposals.

The Philippines is pleased with the Committee's support for NAM's initiative, through an annual thematic debate under the agenda item entitled "Peaceful settlement of disputes", to discuss the means for the settlement of disputes, in accordance with Chapter VI of the UN Charter, including in particular those contained in Article 33. As Iran said, this thematic debate would contribute to the more efficient and effective use of such peaceful means and would promote the culture of peace among Member States.

In this regard, my delegation hopes to see similar support for the constructive proposals of Cuba and of Ghana in relation to the topic of maintenance of international peace and security.

On the proposal of Cuba, we agree on the need to clarify, if not, reiterate the symbiotic relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council. We agreed with other delegations at our meeting last February, that the Committee should consider pragmatic ways to move forward on the proposal, including by referring the issue to the International Law Commission or by setting up a working group to consider the proposal.

On the proposal of Ghana, we support efforts to strengthen the relationship and cooperation between the UN and regional arrangements or agencies in the peaceful settlement of disputes. The proposal is not only relevant to the work of the Committee; it is a felt necessity that aims to fill the gaps in the work of the UN.

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. This, we believe, is the essence of Ghana's proposal. It is very much in line with Article 33 of the UN Charter, and with the 1982 Manila Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes.

To recall, the Manila Declaration is the first important instrument of the work of this Committee, and certainly one of its most significant achievements. It is the first comprehensive plan and consolidation of the legal framework for the peaceful settlement of international disputes, building upon and promoting general international law, the UN Charter, and other key instruments like resolution 2625 of 1970 or the Friendly Relations Declaration. Many delegations continue to cite the enduring importance of the Manila Declaration.

Five years ago, at our 67th session in 2012, the General Assembly, upon the recommendation of the Sixth Committee, welcomed the 30th anniversary of the Manila Declaration.

Many regional and subregional arrangements or agencies play an important role in the maintenance of international peace and security, in terms of both enforcement action and conflict prevention.

This includes the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations or ASEAN, to which the Philippines belongs, and of which the Philippines is Chairman this year, on ASEAN's 50th anniversary. 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.

Peaceful coexistence and regional partnership, ASEAN as a model of regionalism that fosters inclusivity in diversity, and maritime security and cooperation through the rule of law, are some of ASEAN's relevant thematic priorities this year.

The Philippines looks forward to studying the revised working paper to be submitted by Ghana, including possible guidelines to facilitate cooperation between the UN and regional organizations.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.