



# PHILIPPINES

## STATEMENT

Permanent Mission of the Republic of the Philippines to the United Nations  
Agenda Item 83: THE RULE OF LAW AT THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS  
Sixth Committee  
78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly  
16 October 2023, Trusteeship Council  
UN Headquarters New York

**Thank you, Mr. Chair.**

We wish to deliver the following remarks in our national capacity.

The Philippines recognizes the importance of adherence to rule of law at the national and international levels.

On rule of law at the national level, on the sub-topic on “**using technology to advance access to justice for all**” for discussion at this session, the pandemic accelerated the use of technology in the Philippine justice system as the courts and the justice department resorted to ‘new normal’ trials, video-conferencing, online hearings, and e-inquests to uphold the rule of law and to mitigate the challenges posed by the pandemic on access to justice.

The Supreme Court of the Philippines has recognized the potential of emerging technologies with the launch of the Strategic Plan for Judicial Innovations 2022-2027, the Judiciary’s long-term reform program. It aims to address institutional challenges using four guiding principles: Timely and fair delivery of justice, transparency and accountability, equality and inclusivity, and technologically adaptive.

Under the strategic plan, the vision is to modernize court processes and operations, strengthen information and communication technology governance, management and operations, effectively use of data in policy and decision-making and upgrade information

sharing in the justice system. In providing accessible justice for all, the Court aims to, *inter alia*, enhance public access to information and legal services, improve legal aid initiatives, and promote gender fairness and inclusivity.

As stated by the Philippines' chief justice, digital transformation of the judiciary could serve as a 'potent arsenal' in the administration of justice, stressing the role of technology in judicial reforms.

On rule of law at the international level, the Philippines works with all nations to promote the rule of law – advocating the peaceful settlement of disputes, promoting the role of international tribunals and legal bodies to foster greater solidarity around values that underpin the UN. This year, the General Assembly adopted by consensus a resolution to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the Permanent Court of Arbitration.

As an archipelagic state whose destiny is intimately linked with the oceans, we adhere to the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of The Sea as the legal framework governing all activities in the ocean. The primacy of the UNCLOS was affirmed by the 2016 Arbitral Award on the South China Sea which definitively settled the status of historic rights and maritime entitlements.

To conclude, let me to recall what Secretary of Foreign Affairs Enrique Manalo stated at the High-Level Debate of the General Assembly this year. He said:

*“The preservation of a rules-based global order is our collective responsibility. The UN is underwritten by a rules-based order governed by international law and informed by the principles of equity and of justice. Its present and future rest on the predictability and stability of international law, which safeguards the rights of all states. If multilateralism is to endure, all states must adhere to the rule of law.”*

Thank you, Mr. Chair. (END)