



**PERMANENT MISSION OF BRUNEI DARUSSALAM
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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**STATEMENT BY
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TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**AT THE
78TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

**ON
AGENDA ITEM 83:
THE RULE OF LAW AT THE NATIONAL AND
INTERNATIONAL LEVELS**

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Mr. Chairman,

1. Please allow me to take this opportunity to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the Bureau on your elections and to assure you of Brunei Darussalam's full support and cooperation during the deliberations of this Committee.
2. At the outset, Brunei Darussalam aligns with the statement delivered by the Philippines on behalf of ASEAN; and the statement delivered by the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).
3. Brunei Darussalam believes that respect for the rule of law is essential to preserving the peaceful co-existence and good relations among States, especially amid growing uncertainties and in an ever-evolving geo-political landscape.
4. The rule of law is vital in maintaining sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, as well as promoting regional and global peace, security and stability.

Mr. Chairman,

5. Aligned with Brunei Darussalam's foreign policy, we remain steadfast in maintaining a 'friend to all' approach; mutual respect for the territorial integrity, sovereignty, independence and national identity of all nations; peaceful settlement of disputes and non-interference in the internal affairs of other nations.
6. We recognise that these key tenets are also central to the operations of the United Nations and provides an important link between its 3 pillars in supporting international peace and security, and socio-economic development.
7. Towards this end, Brunei Darussalam supports the crucial and leading role of the United Nations in promoting and coordinating efforts at the global level towards strengthening the rule of law.

Mr. Chairman,

8. The United Nations also reinforces the rule of law through its work in areas such as peacekeeping, disarmament, development and good governance.

9. On its part, Brunei Darussalam is firmly committed in upholding the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter in the maintenance of international peace and security. We believe that the rule of law is of utmost importance, especially with its linkages between national and international norms.
10. It is vital that the international system is anchored in the fundamental principles of international law, as enshrined in the United Nations Charter, and we reaffirm our commitment to continue upholding the purposes and principles of this founding document.
11. At the regional level, ASEAN with the support of the United Nations can continue to promote and uphold the rule of law and rules-based regional architecture with ASEAN at its centre.
12. In effectively addressing current as well as emerging regional and global challenges, Brunei Darussalam reaffirms its belief that regionalism and multilateralism are important principles and frameworks of cooperation, and that their strength and value lie in their rules-based nature, inclusivity, transparency and openness, based on mutual benefit and respect.
13. We continue to uphold the principles and values enshrined in the ASEAN Charter, and reaffirm our commitment to maintaining and promoting peace, security and stability in the region in accordance with international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).
14. Brunei Darussalam continues to stress that UNCLOS remains the 'constitution of the oceans', which sets out an international order and comprehensive legal framework within which activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out in a balanced and integrated manner.

Mr. Chairman,

15. Turning to the subtopic for this debate entitled "***Using technology to advance access to justice for all***", Brunei Darussalam recognises the importance of digitalisation in strengthening the fundamental rule of law.
16. In 2016, Brunei Darussalam introduced a legislative amendment to Section 236A of the Criminal Procedure Code to allow victims to provide

evidence through live video or live television link in any inquiry, trial, appeal or proceedings if the court is satisfied that it is expedient in the interest of justice.

17. Like many others during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Brunei Darussalam has had to adopt emergency measures for the functioning of its judicial system and to allow its courts to remain operational as far as possible.
18. In 2021, amendments were made to our legislation to allow for conduct of hearings online in the Supreme Court, Intermediate Courts, and Subordinate Courts and in the same year the Court of Appeal conducted its first criminal appeal via Zoom where submissions were heard from counsel attending remotely from outside the country.
19. Indeed, the pandemic highlighted the need to accelerate the adoption and integration of digital technologies across various sectors, including the justice system. However, at the same time, while embracing technology to effectively serve the public and facilitate equitable access to justice, we must also ensure that the adoption of new technologies does not compromise traditional integrity in favour of efficiency and convenience.
20. It is therefore important that we work and adapt collectively to overcome challenges together to continue delivering justice effectively and efficiently.
21. To conclude, Brunei Darussalam remains committed to working closely together with the United Nations, as well as Member States and other partners to abide by the rule of law, especially in the maintenance of peace and security, both regionally and internationally.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.
