

## **High-level Meeting on the Rule of Law at the National and International Levels**

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Republic of Nepal*

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My delegation wishes to express its sincere appreciation to the President of the General Assembly for organizing this important High-level Meeting on the Rule of Law at the National and International Levels. I hope that the Declaration that we adopted today (resolution 67/1) will be able to advance our commitment and responsibility for upholding the hopes and aspirations of billions of people yearning for a more just, equitable, inclusive and prosperous world.

The concept of the rule of law, which is indelibly linked to democracy and fundamental freedoms, evolved over the course of the historical development of human society in its struggle against feudalism and autocracy. The rule of law is important for the protection of the rights of individual citizens in relation to the State and members of one society in relation to those of others, and for implementing a sound framework of inter-State relationships in the globalized world. More important is that the rule of law should prepare the basis for human society to proceed towards the realm of freedom, ending all forms of exploitation of men by men. We firmly believe that ensuring the rule of law at the international level has as much importance as it does at the national level because it provides essential tools and principles for peaceful coexistence and cooperation among States.

The rule of law, however, should not be used as a cover for domination of one country by another. Practising a double standard in its application should be avoided. When we endeavour to establish the rule of law at the international level, it is extremely important to create a level playing field where all States can participate in an equitable manner. The accumulation of wealth amidst despicable poverty and an absence of resources at the cost of the very existence of our planet cannot be in line with the rule of law.

Nepal believes that the United Nations is the most well-placed and legitimate multilateral institution to promote the rule of law at the national and international levels. Having been established in principle and enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, international law and the promotion of multilateralism in handling all international issues of common concerns play a pivotal role in the promotion of the rule of law in a plural context.

Nepal places high importance on the revitalization of the General Assembly to make it the most legitimate and competent organ for the development of international norms, standards and legal instruments. Nepal remains committed to promoting the rule of law at the international level by adhering to the Charter of the United Nations and fulfilling its obligations emanating from international treaty bodies to which it is a party.

The rule of law at the national level is more important for countries emerging from conflict, where the strengthening of administrative law enforcement, judicial institutions and other governance mechanisms must be accorded top priority. An enhanced level of international support under the aegis of the United Nations would help such countries in grappling with the establishment of an environment conducive to encouraging and ensuring the rule of law. National ownership and capacity-building need to be at the core of our efforts as we seek to establish and sustain the necessary legal and institutional infrastructures. The rule of law must seek to promote inclusive, just and equitable societies if we are to address the root causes of conflict, such as poverty, exclusion, marginalization and deprivation in the political, economic and social spheres.

Nepal is committed to strengthening the rule of law at the national level as part of its historic transformational process. In fact, the historic struggle of all the Nepalese people, entailing the sacrifice of thousands of lives, was for the purpose of establishing the rule of law along with equity and justice. Thus, Nepal is committed to ensuring the rule of law, the promotion and protection of human rights, and ending impunity.

The provisions of the Comprehensive Peace Accord signed in 2006, which was a key turning point in our home-grown peace process, and the interim Constitution, which is a transitional justice mechanism necessary to take the peace process to its logical conclusion, were the outcomes of broad consultations among stakeholders. They meet the national and international requirements for durable peace, justice and reconciliation in a holistic manner. I hope that the international community, which is very supportive of our peace process, understands the sensitivity of that

process and our main task to end the conflict forever. Nepal has ratified major human rights instruments, including seven out of nine core human rights instruments, in recent years. A number of initiatives have been taken to reform governance and establish the rule of law.

In Nepal, the National Human Rights Commission is a designated constitutional body working as a warden of human rights protection and promotion. The capacity of the institution is being built as a real custodian of human rights for all the people. A mechanism for effective adjudication of the decisions and recommendations of the National Human Rights Commission and judgements of the Supreme Court have been established at the Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers.

Reforms in legal aid, judicial reform, reforms in police laws, and a number of other reforms and amendments to legislation that were deemed discriminatory have come into effect. Other important initiatives, started with earnest objectives, are under way. For least developed countries emerging from conflict, an enhanced level of support with adequate resources, know-how and technical capacity-building are needed in a coordinated and coherent manner to strengthen the rule of law.

The international community should deliver effective support measures to promote national ownership and capacity-building for those countries, for the advancement of the rule of law. I also call for adherence to multilateralism and respect for the guiding principles and standards of international law at the international level.