

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

*His Excellency Mr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan,  
President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria*

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Let me join my colleagues in first congratulating the Secretary-General on his initiative to focus attention on a subject matter that is at the heart of the Charter of our Organization, and for providing the platform for Member States to share useful experiences and renew their commitment to the observance of the rule of law.

Nigeria believes that the strengthening of the rule of law at the national and international levels is a shared responsibility of the international community. It is undoubtedly an essential condition for peaceful cooperation and coexistence among States, and critical to addressing global challenges in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. Nigeria therefore subscribes to the view that it is only an international system based on the rule of law that can guarantee the protection of the rights of individuals and the interests of the less powerful in the global arena.

We recognize the close nexus between the rule of law and democracy and the primacy of the rule of law as a prerequisite for the promotion and protection of democracy, good governance and sustainable development. Nigeria therefore envisions the promotion of the rule of law at the international level as a vital means of strengthening cooperation and promoting enduring peace and security among States.

Nigeria has also consistently demonstrated strong political will to fulfil its international obligations through the domestication of relevant international instruments and recommended practices, such as the enactment of the Freedom of Information Act 2011 to promote open government, the Terrorism Prevention Act 2011 and the Money Laundering (Prohibition) Act 2011 to give impetus to the global fight against terrorism, terrorist financing and economic crimes. The Human Rights Commission (Amendment) Act 2011 was also enacted to broaden its mandate. Similarly, electoral reforms have been undertaken to consolidate the democratic process. Our focus has been on the conduct of credible, free and fair

elections in order to avail the citizenry the right to freely choose those who should govern them. The elections conducted so far in Nigeria attest to that.

It is imperative for the rule of law to be strengthened at both the national and international levels to ensure equity and fairness. The rule of law at the international level must be based on a number of the core principles of the United Nations, which were further reaffirmed in the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1). This implies that States must, in good faith, honour their international obligations, including the obligation to refrain from the threat or use of force, the obligation to settle disputes through peaceful means, and the obligation to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms and abide by international humanitarian law.

The principle of equality of States remains an important element in the promotion of the rule of law at the international level. The international community should therefore discourage any semblance of selective observance and enforcement of international law. I urge Member States to commit to the faithful implementation of the pledges deposited with the United Nations at this event.

Let me assure Member States of my Government's unwavering commitment to upholding the rule of law and to duly implementing the pledges we have made to the international community.