



## BANGLADESH

**Statement under Agenda Item 84: *The Rule of Law at the National and International Levels* at the Sixth Committee of the 71<sup>st</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly, 05 October 2016, Trusteeship Council Chamber**

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**Mr. Chairman/ Distinguished delegates,**

The Bangladesh delegation takes note of the Secretary General's report containing information on the work of the Rule of Law Coordination and Resource Group, and that of the Rule of Law Unit on its behalf. We underscore the importance of enhancing coordination, coherence and visibility of the work of the various constituent bodies of the Coordination and Resource Group.

It is encouraging to see the Rule of Law Unit taking initiatives to develop police guidance on conflict, displacement and land related issues, and organizing side-events on topical issues of interest like prison reform and e-justice, among others. It would be useful to have such policy development and dialogue to feature wider participation of Member States in order to promote awareness, dissemination and inclusiveness.

Bangladesh consistently supports the UN's strategic leadership in developing an international framework of norms and standards, including in new areas of human endeavours with extra-territorial ramifications. We welcome the added attention being given to the attendant responsibilities of promoting national compliance with multilateral legal instruments, and thereby enhancing access to justice for all mirroring Member States' commitment to leave no one behind.

Bangladesh would recommend future Reports of the Secretary General to consider reflecting the possible interface between the UN's rule of law activities and the corresponding global targets under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

We take this opportunity to focus on three areas of interest for our delegation:

**First**, as a State Party to most of the seminal human rights, international humanitarian law, disarmament, criminal justice and environmental protection treaties, Bangladesh welcomes the growing number of ratifications and accessions to the core instruments in those domains. Our delegation has been pleased to deposit our Instrument of Ratification to the Paris Agreement at the high-level event on 21 September 2016. As a climate vulnerable country, we appreciate the Agreement's ratification by some of the key international actors, and invite other major carbon-emitting countries to join the Agreement to lend further credibility to their nationally determined actions to mitigate climate change impacts.

We draw satisfaction from the progress in the work of the Preparatory Committee on developing recommendations for a draft international legally binding instrument on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction. Bangladesh wishes to see broad-based agreement in the Preparatory Committee on certain fundamental issues of concern, including the scope of the proposed legal instrument. A selective approach largely from political or commercial considerations would compromise the guiding principle of the 'common heritage of mankind' for the Area and the High Seas.

We also reaffirm our abiding support and advocacy for concluding work on a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism and a Comprehensive Convention on Nuclear Disarmament under the auspices of the UN.

Bangladesh recognises the work on further streamlining the depository functions of the Secretary General and on rationalizing the division of labour among the various entities serving as Secretariats for different multilateral treaties. Bangladesh would be positively disposed to considering this Committee's possible work on reviewing the regulations giving effect to Article 102 of the UN Charter, including for promoting further efficient use of the UN Treaty Collection website.

**Second**, the issues of addressing impunity, ensuring accountability and liquidating the legacies of the past are of critical importance for Bangladesh. We continue to urge the international community's support for national judicial and investigation processes to fight a culture of impunity in proven instances of mass atrocities. To this effect, we note with appreciation the UN's specialized and technical assistance to facilitate nationally-led and owned transitional justice processes in the Democratic Republic of Congo,

Central African Republic, Mali, South Sudan and Darfur, Sudan. As a troop and police contributing country to the UN peacekeeping missions deployed in those countries, Bangladesh stands ready to lend its support in this regard in any comparable setting, as appropriate.

As a State Party to the Rome Statute, we attach importance to the evolving work of the International Criminal Court, in the backdrop of its multi-faceted challenges. We join calls for ensuring adequate resources for the Court to effectively deliver on the cases referred to it by the Security Council. As we welcome the Court's groundbreaking forays into ensuring accountability for destruction of cultural heritage, we recommend discretion about extraneous efforts to widen the Court's remit to a whole range of issues at this critical stage of confidence and trust building.

Bangladesh remains particularly supportive of multi-pronged efforts to prevent and ensure accountability for violence against women and children during armed conflicts, including by non-state actors. The heinous acts of trafficking, enslavement and torture of women and children by certain international terrorist groups must be accounted for and brought to justice in due course. We appreciate the work of the Secretary General's concerned Special Representatives in promoting women's participation in peace processes and disengaging and rehabilitating children deployed in armed conflicts.

**Third**, the UN's work on promoting national level implementation of multilateral treaties should be promoted as one of its flagship activities for its high visibility and continued relevance. Bangladesh encourages the concerned UN agencies to maintain their focus on extending such support to conflict affected countries in response their nationally owned and identified needs.

We suggest developing appropriate tools for assessing impacts of UN's work in legal and judicial reform, prison and correction facilities improvement, DDR, SSR and transitional justice on the overarching objective of "sustaining peace" in conflict affected settings. The relevant work of the Peacebuilding Commission and Peacebuilding Fund should be suitably factored into the work of the Rule of Law Coordination and Resource Group.

In the backdrop of the work on the Global Compacts on refugees and migrants, we take particular note of UNHCR's innovative work on promoting access to justice for refugees and legitimate proprietary rights for returnees in different settings. In Bangladesh, our Government has recently decided to provide an 'information card' to the

undocumented displaced population group from neighbouring Myanmar, which should facilitate their access to justice among other issues.

In this connection, we reaffirm our principled support for possible consideration of an international legal regime to ensure protection and assistance for cross-border displacement of people due to climate change and its various impacts. A rules-based international order cannot remain oblivious to the evident vulnerabilities of these people and their uncertain status in a legal vacuum.

Like many resource-constrained settings, Bangladesh continues to face the challenge of developing and promulgating national implementing legislations for the entire gamut of multilateral treaties we are party to. A recently-formed National IHL Committee is working towards addressing certain gaps in the relevant areas. We would appreciate need-based and results-oriented support from the UN and other international partners to this effect.

Bangladesh aligns itself with the Statement delivered by the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

I thank you.