

Statement

by

Yibza Aynekullu

Representative of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

at

the 6th Committee of the 67th Session of the General Assembly of the

United Nations

On

Agenda Item 83

The Rule of Law at the National and International Levels

10 October 2012

New York

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation appreciates the efforts made by the Secretary General to convene a high level meeting on the rule of law. Moreover, the activities that have been undertaken by the Organization in the area and described in document A/67/290 are indeed encouraging. We indeed attach great importance to the mandate and the work being performed by the Rule of Law Coordination and Resource Group.

Mr. Chairman,

For normal international life to be possible the rule of law should govern inter-state relation in all spheres of life. Not only does the rule of law serve as a basis for peaceful coexistence of nations in the world but it is also a guarantee for insuring the safety and security of our planet. At the regional level, we from the horn of Africa are more aware than most how much lack of compliance with principles of international law is at the roots of inter-state misunderstanding and discord. There is no doubt that strict adherence to principles of international law can lay the basis for the prevention of conflict and for making it possible for peoples and countries to focus their attention on the challenge they face in the fight against poverty.

Here, it is critical that the real challenge is properly appreciated. It is not that difficult to profess commitment to the rule of law and to legal obligations. What is critical is ensuring their implementation. And that is where a real deficit exists and not too many can claim that they have no shortcomings in this regard.

We in Ethiopia have always made the necessary effort to help ensure that in our region the rule of law is implemented and defended as effectively as possible.

At the national level, over the last twenty years we have made major progress to see to it that the rule of law is the basis of governance and citizens count on the state carrying out its obligations in this regard.

The Ethiopian constitution enacted in 1995 has unequivocally established equality among the peoples of Ethiopia by guaranteeing their rights to develop their languages and cultures as well as the exercise of all rights to be able to administer themselves within a federal system in which power has been allowed to devolve to the lowest administrative level. The whole thrust of the

Ethiopian constitutional arrangement is ensuring equality among the peoples of Ethiopia on the basis of the rule of law within the context of effective separation of power.

Mr. Chairman,

The five year (2010/11 - 2014/15) Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) of Ethiopia introduced to transform the country gives a great deal of attention to ways of improving the justice system in an accelerated manner, thereby directly promoting the rule of law and good governance. The justice sector reform program which is part of the GTP is also designed to enable the judiciary and the law enforcement organs to be more responsive to the needs of the public whom they serve.

To guarantee the full prevalence of rule of law, the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission and the institution of the ombudsman with their branches in all parts of the country are set up respond citizens' complaints. These institutions are some of the mechanisms through which the government is made accountable to the public at large by complying with its national and international obligations of ensuring the implementation of international human rights at the national level.

Mr. Chairman, at the end of the day what is critical is national ownership of all these activities. It is when citizens of a country are fully in ownership of their reform initiatives that the exercise will be successful.

Thank you