



PHILIPPINES

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STATEMENT

by

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on

Agenda Item 84
Report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the
United Nations and on the Strengthening
of the Role of the Organization

before the

Sixth Committee
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United Nations General Assembly

Trusteeship Council
United Nations Headquarters, NY
14 October 2013

STATEMENT OF THE PHILIPPINES

Item 84 – Report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization

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Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Before anything else, the Philippines aligns itself with the Islamic Republic of Iran for its statement on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Nous souhaitons remercier S. Exc. M. Jean-Francis Zinsou, l'Ambassadeur et Représentant permanent du Bénin, et son bureau pour leur leadership et rapport du Comité spécial, suite de nos séances février et mars dernier.

Since its creation in 1975, the Committee has invaluablely assisted Member States which only wish to make our Organization function more effectively, in order to better achieve its purposes.

The proposals and working papers submitted by Libya, Venezuela, Belarus and the Russian Federation, and Cuba on important topics within the mandate of the Committee not only enrich its work, but attest to its strengths and value.

Mr. Chairman, as the Non-Aligned Movement emphasized, the question of the peaceful settlement of disputes between states is a priority for the Movement as well as the Committee. The peaceful settlement of disputes is *sine qua non* to international peace and security.

Last year, through the excellent preparatory work of the Committee, the UN commemorated the 30th anniversary of the 1982 Manila Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes. This Declaration is the first comprehensive plan and consolidation of the legal framework for the peaceful settlement of international disputes, building upon and promoting general international law, the UN Charter particularly Article 33, and other key instruments like the 1970 Friendly Relations Declaration (GA Res. 2625 (XXV), 24 October 1970).

The Manila Declaration is the first important instrument of the work of the Committee, and one of its most significant achievements. Many delegations and the report of the Secretary-General cited the importance of the Manila Declaration in their statements on the previous item.

Mr. Chairman, arbitration is one of the modes of peaceful settlement identified by the UN Charter and the Manila Declaration.

The Philippines continues to breathe life into these living instruments and the institutions they support through the arbitration proceedings we initiated to clarify maritime entitlements and thus resolve, with certainty and predictability, the maritime disputes in our region. This can clear the way for a sensible discussion of any arrangement for common development.

We also actively seek the expeditious conclusion of the Code of Conduct in our region, in order to manage tensions. This is an opportunity for the parties concerned to collectively exercise the observance of the rule of law in the region, while respecting each other's rights and interests.

Both these tracks are legally binding and anchored on international law, *specifically the preemptory norm of peaceful settlement of disputes*. Mr. Chairman, respect for institutions is essential to the observance of international rule of law. This applies to institutions duly constituted pursuant to international treaties and conventions, like the arbitral tribunal created through the mechanism of compulsory arbitration under Annex VII of the UN Convention of the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

Let me end with the words of President Benigno S. Aquino III during the recently concluded ASEAN Summit in Brunei, and I quote: "... [O]ur development as a region cannot be realized in an international environment where the rule of law does not exist. Thus, the recognition of the rule of law ensures that every member state's interest is upheld and respected..."

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.