



The Permanent Mission of Egypt
to the United Nations
New York

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**STATEMENT BY EGYPT ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP
ON AGENDA ITEM 85
"RULE OF LAW AT THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS"
10 OCTOBER 2013**

Mr. Chairman,

It gives me great pleasure to deliver this statement on behalf of the African group on the "*the rule of law at the national and international levels*", a topic of great importance to the African States.

The African Group welcomes the convening of the high level meeting on the rule of law at the national and international levels on September 24, 2012 in which the need for universal adherence to the rule of law at both the national and international levels was reaffirmed. Convening the high level meeting was in itself an important step for the General Assembly's consideration of the rule of law. It also contributed to the ongoing efforts aimed at developing a common understanding among Member States on the rule of law in light that there is no commonly agreed upon definition for this notion.

Mr. Chairman,

The African Group welcomes choosing "the rule of law and the peaceful settlement of disputes" as a theme for this year's debate in the Sixth Committee. Africa strongly encourages all States to resort to the relevant international law mechanisms for the pacific settlement of their disputes, such as the International Judicial bodies as well as international arbitration. On the regional level, African States have established a number of mechanisms under the auspices of the African Union for the settlement of disputes including the African Council for peace and security and the African high commissions of inquiry.

Under Article 4 of The Constitutive Act of the African Union, African States reiterate the respect for the rule of law as one of the cardinal principles that should guide the conduct of African States and our Continental organization. Over the years, successive Summits of African leaders have taken decisions and adopted instruments, including human rights treaties, reaffirming

their determination to ensure that the governments and peoples of Africa observe, promote and protect human rights and the rule of law. African States acknowledge that upholding the rule of law is imperative for the promotion of stability, peace and security as well as conducive for good governance and closer integration on the African continent.

The African Group is of the firm conviction that international law must remain a tool for the fulfillment of the goal of having a better world for all. It cannot be overemphasized that for international law to promote more effectively the protection of the dignity of all Individuals and States in the world, the international legal order ought to infuse fairness and equity into areas such as international human rights and humanitarian law, international economic law, environmental law as well as rules of international law relating to the maintenance of international peace and security; To this end, in the application of international law, the fundamental principle of equality before the law must be strictly adhered to. There should be no double standards if international law is to promote friendly relations and cooperation among States and to cultivate a just, secure and peaceful world anchored on the rule of law. This must include the urgent reform of various international institutions such as the Security Council and other UN institutions as well as international financial institutions.

Mr. Chairman,

Being a strong defender of a balanced approach towards both levels of the rule of law, national and international, the African group supports effective implementation of international obligations on the national level. We call upon states to contribute to ensuring that the rules of various international law instruments adopted by States are effectively implemented in domestic systems.

Capacity building is key for the promotion of the rule of law at the national level and for strengthening national capacities of Member States, including through enhanced technical assistance. We believe that capacity-building and rule of law activities, should be anchored by two interrelated concepts in determining needs and priorities, namely effectiveness and local or national ownership. Together these principles require partnership and mutual respect between the providers and recipients. It is also necessary to take into account the customs and national political and socioeconomic realities of each recipient state.

In this regard, the African Group notes the various activities of the Rule of Law Unit under the guidance of Rule of Law Coordination and Resource Group, aimed at bringing about better coherence, coordination and quality of rule of law capacity-building activities both within the Organization and at country level. Efforts by the Rule of Law Unit to explore initiatives to enable donors, recipients and other entities involved in financing rule of law activities to work in a more collaborative and coordinated manner, must be encouraged.

Mr. Chairman,

To conclude, the African Group looks forward to continuing the discussions and exchange views in the sixth committee on the state of the rule of law since the 2005 world summit outcome document.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.