



Statement

by

**H.E. Mr. Saleumxay Kommasith, Ambassador,
Permanent Representative of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to the
United Nations**

on behalf of

the Association of the Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

at

**The Sixth Committee of the
68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly**

on

**Agenda Item 85 "The rule of law at international and
national levels"**

New York, 9 October 2013

(Please check against delivery)

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations or ASEAN, namely, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam and Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Mr. Chairman,

ASEAN is of the view that the full implementation of obligations under the UN Charter and respect for the fundamental principles of international law, in particular, the principles of sovereign equality of States, peaceful settlement of disputes and territorial integrity, is central and essential for international peace and security. The rule of law constitutes the fundamental element of ensuring justice, equality, stability and sustainable economic development and it is relevant to all three pillars of the United Nations: peace and security, development and human rights. In this context, ASEAN recognizes that the rule of law underpins all aspects of interactions between States and other actors in international relations. The rule of law is not only the common goal the international community is trying to attain but also an effective means to strengthen friendly relations, promote international cooperation and development among nations. Therefore, selectivity and double standard of application of international law must be avoided.

Mr. Chairman,

The fundamental principles and purpose of the Rule of Law are enshrined in the ASEAN Charter, which, among others, stipulates that ASEAN respects the principles of enhancing peace and security, peaceful settlement of disputes, democracy, strengthening the rule of law and good governance, and respect for the promotion and protection of human rights. The rule of law is also clearly reflected in the landmark ASEAN Human Rights Declaration recently adopted by the ASEAN Leaders. This emphasizes that the rule of law and the protection and promotion of human rights are intertwined and mutually reinforcing. It is also an effective tool for ASEAN to promote sustainable economic development through the establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), which will facilitate the flow of trade, investment and people in the region.

Since its inception in 1967, ASEAN has developed from a loose grouping into a rule-based organization with its own Charter and legal personality. Striving to build a community governed by the rule of law, ASEAN has intensified its efforts to realize the ASEAN Community by 2015 through effective and timely implementation of the ASEAN Charter, the Roadmap for an ASEAN Community, the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity, the IAI Work Plan II (2009-2015), and the ASEAN Roadmap towards realizing the Millennium Development Goals. The theme of the 23rd ASEAN Summit "Our People, Our Future Together ", which is being held on October 9-10, 2013 in Brunei Darussalam, highlights the effort made by the peoples of ASEAN to build an ASEAN community, which is politically cohesive, economically integrated, culturally harmonious and socially responsible.

Committed to stability and security in the region, ASEAN notes the growing interests of other countries to accede to ASEAN's key legal documents such as the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) and to respect the Treaty on Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (SEANWFZ). In addition to effective implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) signed between ASEAN and China, the early conclusion of a Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) will promote trust and confidence-building, prevent incident, and manage and address incidents if they occur.

The ASEAN Member States reaffirm commitments to fulfil their obligations in accordance with the UN Charter and under international treaties to which they are party. The adoption of a number of legal frameworks and mechanisms by the ASEAN Member States over the years at both national and ASEAN levels has clearly reflected such commitments. Furthermore, the participation of high level delegations from ASEAN in the High Level Meeting on the Rule of Law last year also confirmed that ASEAN stands ready to work with all partners especially the United Nations in strengthening and promoting the rule of law at the international, regional and national levels.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, ASEAN acknowledges that strengthening and promoting rule of law is a common goal, as well as a shared responsibility and aspirations of the all UN Member States. ASEAN therefore supports the General Assembly in continuing deliberation under this agenda item. It is

the essential platform for the international community to share experiences, increase understanding and enhance cooperation. ASEAN together with all UN Member States, partners and stakeholders is ready to make their efforts towards the realization of the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and international law.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.