

**STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE AMBASSADOR FREDERICK M.M. SHAVA  
ON THE RULE OF LAW AT NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS:  
SIXTH COMMITTEE: 70<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

Since this is the first time my delegation is speaking in this Committee during this session, allow me, Mr. Chairman to congratulate you and your Bureau on your election to preside over the work of this Committee. We are confident that under your able stewardship, the Committee will discharge its responsibilities with diligence.

My delegation associates itself with the statements delivered by the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and South Africa on behalf of the African Group. We welcome the sub topic on “The role of multilateral treaty processes in promoting and advancing the rule of law” and wish to share some experiences in our national capacity.

**Mr. Chairman,**

The rule of law at national and international levels is essential for the achievement of development, peace and security and respect for human rights. The Charter of the United Nations and the principles enshrined therein provide normative guidance and should be the main basis for relations between States. These principles include:

- The sovereign equality of states
- Settlement of disputes by peaceful means
- Refraining from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations
- Non interference in the internal affairs of any State

Multilateralism should be the main foundation of addressing global challenges and problems. Zimbabwe therefore remains concerned about the application of unilateral measures which are contrary to the principles of the United Nations Charter and International Law. Zimbabwe and other developing countries are victims of such measures which undermine our socio-economic development and harmonious relations between States. We call upon those who maintain these unilateral measures to lift them and ensure that no country is left behind in transforming our world under Agenda 2030. Indeed, paragraph 30 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development strongly urges States “to refrain from promulgating and applying any unilateral, economic, financial or trade measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that impede the full achievement of economic and social development, particularly in developing countries.”

**Mr. Chairman,**

The use of force and Chapter VII measures should be a tool of last resort. We have witnessed how the use of force to achieve political objectives of some countries has resulted in even worse situations where the rule of law, peace, stability and respect for human rights have broken almost irretrievably. Zimbabwe therefore counsels against the tendency to resort to the threat or use of force at every excuse.

We also eschew the practice of applying double standards, and hypocrisy in the conduct of international relations. No state should stand in judgment over others. By the same token, no State should seek to prescribe or impose its values on others. We should all embrace the spirit of cooperation and co-existence guided by the principles of multilateralism and the rule of law.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Cascading from the universal principles in the Charter of the United Nations, the African Union's founding instruments provide a solid framework for the rule of law on the continent. The Constitutive Act, which is the AU's fundamental law, rejects and condemns unconstitutional changes of government. Other progressive measures taken to strengthen respect for democratic principles, human rights, the rule of law and good governance include the adoption of numerous standards and norms such as the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance which emphasizes the supremacy of the constitution and constitutional order and the African Charter on Human

and People's Rights which provided for the establishment of the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR).

**Mr. Chairman,**

As a sub-region, we have adopted a number of multilateral legal instruments to enhance cooperation in strengthening the rule of law and to fight crime. These include among others Protocols on:

- Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters
- Extradition
- Control of Firearms, Ammunition and Other Materials
- Against Corruption
- Combating Illicit Drug Trafficking
- A Declaration against Terrorism

At the centre of our efforts to combat crime is the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security and the Southern Africa Regional Police Chief Cooperation Organisation (SARPCCO). We believe we have positive experiences to share with other regions in the area of entrenching the rule of law.

At national level, Zimbabwe is taking measures to strengthen the rule of law. In 2013, we adopted a home grown Constitution which was developed through consultations, at all levels. The Constitution was approved through a national referendum. All our laws are being aligned with the New Constitution.

The Constitution strengthens the principle of the separation of powers and establishes independent Commissions that have oversight over issues pertaining to the rights of citizens.

These include the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission which is an independent body to ensure that the will of citizens exercised through the ballot box is conducted in a free, fair and transparent manner and the outcomes are respected.

Another important body provided for in the Constitution is the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission which oversees the respect for the rights of Citizens.

The Zimbabwe Media Commission protects the rights of the Fourth Estate to report freely and without fear of persecution or prosecution. Indeed our independent judiciary has been very active in ensuring that any laws that are deemed to compromise the freedom of the media are struck off.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Zimbabwe stands ready to cooperate in multilateral processes, treaty based or otherwise to promote and advance the rule of law.

I thank you.