

**Statement by Turkey at the Sixth Committee  
for the 71th Session of the General Assembly  
on agenda item 84 "The Rule of Law at the national and  
international levels"  
(5.10.2016)**

Mr. Chair,

The rule of law is at the basis of any peaceful, stable and prosperous society. Respect for the rule of law and international law is also essential for peaceful coexistence and cooperation among States.

In this framework we welcome and support the activities of the UN aimed at promoting the rule of law at both international and national levels. We thank the Secretary General for his report entitled "Strengthening and Coordinating UN rule of law activities (A/71/196)", which summarizes the activities of the UN in this field and highlights the important role that the UN plays in reinforcing the rule of law. We believe that the Rule of Law Coordination and Resource Group and the Rule of Law Unit play a key role in the coordination and coherence of the various activities of the UN and affiliated bodies in this regard.

We encourage the UN Secretariat to further strengthen the interlinkages between the three pillars of the United Nations, peace and security, development and human rights, and the rule of law. In particular, the principle of good governance, the rule of law and accountability are crucial components of an enabling environment for sustainable development and the key enablers for the achievement of the 2030 sustainable development agenda. In this context Turkey strongly supports the implementation of SDG 16, which is to "Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels."

Mr. Chair,

Another useful activity of the UN Rule of Law Unit that we would like to highlight here are its efforts to facilitate the sharing of national practices to advance specific aspects of the rule of law.

Turkey has been actively taking part and contributing to these efforts. Together with Argentina, Rwanda and the Rule of Law Unit on behalf of the Rule of Law Coordination and Resource Group, we have hosted an event on March 1<sup>st</sup> entitled "Implementing international standards and norms: sharing national practices on prison reform".

On June 1<sup>st</sup>, another such event, hosted this time by Turkey, Italy, Mexico and the Rule of Law Unit, focused on the theme of "E-justice: sharing national experiences in enhancing transparency, effectiveness and access to justice".

This particular event highlighted the crucial role that information and communication technologies can play in facilitating the speedy, cost-effective and transparent administration of justice and thus ensuring access to justice for all.

This brings me to one of the subtopics chosen for this year's debate, which is "Practical measures to facilitate access to justice for all, including for the poorest and most vulnerable".

In this respect, Turkey attaches importance to cooperation with relevant international actors that help sharing of good practices among experts and raising awareness. Currently, a project by the UN Development Programme on "Support to the Improvement of Legal Aid Practices for Access to Justice for All in Turkey" is underway, in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice and the Union of Bar Associations in Turkey. The Project aims to develop coordinated efforts for enhancing the quality of legal aid services in Turkey as well as the capacity of attorneys, particularly addressing the needs of disadvantaged groups.

Mr. Chair,

I would like to now turn to the second subtopic of this year, "Sharing national practices of States in the implementation of multilateral treaties".

Turkey considers multilateral treaties as an essential tool to advance the rule of law at the international level. Multilateral treaties, by setting international standards and harmonizing rules, have enhanced predictability in international relations, and paved the way for greater international cooperation in many fields, from transport to trade, from health to communications.

The important role played by the Office of Legal Affairs in discharging the UN Secretary General's functions of depositary of multilateral treaties and their registration and publication, on the basis of Article 102 of the Charter, is also significant in advancing the rule of law in the framework of multilateral treaties.

Multilateral treaties have also played an essential role for the promotion and protection of human rights. A party to the main human rights conventions of the UN as well as to a significant number of conventions of the Council of Europe, Turkey believes sustainability of the human rights regime lies with the universal ratification and effective implementation of the key human rights treaties.

To this end, at the national level, comprehensive reforms on human rights have continuously been realized since the year 2000. In this respect, several judicial reform packages have also been adopted with the aim of strengthening the independence and impartiality of the judiciary, enhancing its efficacy and facilitating access to justice. Accordingly, substantial

legislative amendments have been made to the Turkish Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure.

Mr. Chair,

In concluding, I wish to reaffirm my country's firm commitment to the rule of law at both national and international levels and our readiness for any exchange of best practices.

Thank you.