

Statement by the Representative of Japan  
At the Meeting of the Sixth Committee  
on the Rule of Law at the National and International Levels

5 October 2017

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to begin by expressing my appreciation to the Deputy Secretary-General for her briefing on the United Nations' rule of law activities.

The essence of the rule of law lies in the supremacy of law over arbitrary power, ensuring that power is exercised to protect and benefit the people. A predictable international rules-based order also makes friendly and equitable relations possible between States. The rule of law provides the essential foundation for a just and fair society at both the national and international levels, and its promotion is one of the pillars of Japan's foreign policy.

The international judicial organs play a crucial role in ensuring the rule of law and the peaceful settlement of disputes. These organs include the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) and the International Criminal Court (ICC). Japan attaches great importance to the work of these organs and has supported them both financially and through providing highly qualified judges and officials. This year, the three principals of these courts visited Japan: Judge Ronny Abraham, President of the ICJ; Judge Vladimir Golitsyn, President of the ITLOS; and Judge Silvia Fernandez de Grumendi, President of the ICC. They each met with Prime Minister Abe, who reiterated Japan's support for their respective organs and their internationally expanding roles in supporting the rule of law.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation greatly appreciates the role of the UN in promoting and universalizing the rule of law, as described in the report. The General Assembly plays a vital role in the progressive development and codification of international law. We welcome that this year, active discussions were held at the International

Law Commission (ILC), with new members elected last year. The work and reports of the ILC continue to make important contributions to this committee. We look forward to a lively debate later this month.

Japan appreciates the Secretary-General's first report on the rule of law. My delegation recognizes the important outcome and progress achieved by the United Nations in support of Member States' rule of law initiatives. Japan attaches great importance to accountability for serious international crimes, and as a responsible member of the Security Council, recently co-sponsored the Security Council resolution 2379 on accountability for ISIL(Da'esh)'s crimes in Iraq. The report's lessons learned on international accountability mechanisms are very insightful. We should keep these lessons in mind in our daily discussions.

Mr. Chairman,

Japan undertakes a broad range of rule of law support activities, both domestically and internationally, in order to further disseminate international law and the rule of law. Some aspects of this start small and locally: each year, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Japanese Society of International Law host the Asia Cup, an international law moot court competition in Tokyo, for university students from throughout Asia. We believe that this is an excellent training opportunity for future legal professionals to deepen their understanding of practical international law and the importance of the peaceful settlement of disputes. We also work closely with the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO) to promote discussion among its Member States on current topics related to international law.

Other efforts are global in scale. We have prioritized support for international rule-making and legal procedures on areas as diverse as trade, criminal justice, and the oceans. Maritime law is a particular focus. Each year, we host the International Symposium on the Law of the Sea, and we also actively contribute qualified professionals to ITLOS and the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf. We are also major financial contributors to the ICC and ITLOS, as well as the ICJ through assessed contributions. Additionally, we are honored to host the United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in 2020 in Kyoto. The Congress's priority areas will include crime

prevention for social and economic development; multidimensional approaches to promoting the rule of law, including through institution building; and fostering a culture of lawfulness.

The rule of law is also woven closely into our international assistance efforts, where rule-making meets implementation on the ground. Capacity building for justice and rule of law institutions features prominently in aid efforts by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and our peacekeepers have contributed to capacity building of police in Cambodia and Timor-Leste. As the Focal Point for Institution Building of the United Nations' Peacebuilding Commission, we are currently working to focus attention and resources on strengthening criminal justice systems and rules-based local governance in areas such as West Africa and the Sahel.

These are just a few examples, but I hope they provide an illustration of Japan's ongoing commitment to enhancing the rule of law.

Thank you.