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STATEMENT BY
BY
MR. AMADOU JAITEH
FIRST SECRETARY
OF THE
PERMANENT MISSION OF THE GAMBIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

ON THE RULE OF LAW
AT THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS

AT THE SIXTH COMMITTEE
73RD SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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Mr. Chair,

I thank you for the floor once again as I make these few remarks in my national capacity. The Republic of The Gambia wishes to thank the Secretary-General for his report as contained in document A/73/253, which highlights the United Nations rule of law developments and activities at the national and international levels over the past year.

While expressing gratitude for your exemplary stewardship, kindly permit my delegation to associate itself with the statement delivered by myself on behalf of the African Group and the statement by the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the non-aligned movement (NAM).

Mr. Chair,

As a people, our shared values are guided by the principles of international law, which by anticipation states are expected to respect, by consenting to its practice. We therefore welcome the United Nations rule of law development activities, in particular, at the National level. The Republic of The Gambia takes due note of this approach, which is highly relevant and pertinent for preventing conflict and sustaining peace.

Given that the sustenance of peace is among the highest of global priorities for the UN System, my delegation once again welcomed the adoption of concurrent Security Council and General Assembly resolutions in April 2016 as an important step for renewed attention in peace and the sustainment of peace.

It is therefore true that the linkages between the three pillars of the UN Charter, namely: development, peace and security, and human rights is not by accident rather as elements that speak to human dignity today. The rule of law, therefore, sits at the pinnacle of priorities within priorities of the Government of the Republic of The Gambia.

Mr. Chair

In order to preserve the dignity of its people, in line with international practice, the Government of the Republic of The Gambia has devised a three-step approach in its National Development Plan in the following order: **Human Rights, Peace and Security and Development.**

1. Human Rights

It would be recalled that African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights established by the African Charter, better known as the Banjul Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights is housed in the Republic of The Gambia. The Government of The Gambia is ready to support the work of this institution and to promote Banjul as the Human Rights Capital of Africa. Mindful of the values of human rights entrusted with, we rely heavily on the rule of law as the vehicle to promote, protect and respect the values of human rights.

The rule of law provides a structure through which the exercise of power is subjected to agreed rules guaranteeing the protection of all human rights. The rule of law, therefore, requires that legal processes, institutions and substantive norms are consistent with human rights including the core principles of equality under the law, accountability before the law and fairness in the protection and vindication of rights.

2. Peace and Security

Mr. Chair,

One of the most important reasons for the establishment of the United Nations was to bring peace or settle international disputes or conflict situations, which might lead to a breach of the peace. In this regard, the rule of law ensures that international law and the principles of justice apply equally to all States and equally adhered to by all. Respect for the rule of law generates and enabling environment for achieving the purposes of the United Nations Charter.

It is for these reasons that the current Government of the Republic of The Gambia deemed it fit to prioritize the need for security sector reform. Suffice it, to say that the ideal functioning of the security sector of any country is built on the rule of law that supports the consolidation of democracy. Security Sector Reform is one priority within priorities highlighted in our new National Development Agenda, which also places emphasis on inclusivity, respect for human rights and rule of law.

3. Development

Mr. Chair

The Republic of The Gambia attaches great importance to economic growth and development, which is why the connection between rule of law and development is highly appreciated at the apex of our development agenda. This committee would recall that in the Declaration of the High-level Meeting on the Rule of Law, Member States of our organization noted that:

“the Rule of law and development are strongly interrelated and mutually reinforcing, that the advancement of the rule of law at the national and international levels is essential for sustained inclusive economic growth, sustainable development, the eradication of poverty and hunger and the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the rights to development, all of which in turn reinforce the rule of law”.

In closing, therefore, Mr. Chair, we call for the recognition of the interrelationship that exists between human rights, peace and security and the rule of law. We further call on all members of this organization not to overlook this connection: this is because lack of understanding or appreciation of the interlinkages between human rights, peace and security and the rule of law may lead to dire consequences stirred by poor livelihoods, injustice, insecurity and social inequality. It is in this connection that The Gambia is undergoing a major overhaul of its legal systems for a better-consolidated rule of law that is consistent with internationally recognized best practices.

We thank you.