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STATEMENT BY
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**DURING THE SIXTH COMMITTEE'S CONSIDERATION OF
AGENDA ITEM 85: "THE RULE OF LAW AT THE NATIONAL AND
INTERNATIONAL LEVELS" AT THE 76TH SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

8 October 2021
United Nations HQ,
New York

Madam Chairperson,

My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the African Group by the distinguished representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Morocco respectively and takes the floor to highlight national efforts to uphold the principle of the rule of law in the context of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Madam Chairperson,

At the outset, my delegation would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report on the rule of law at national and international levels contained in document no. A/76/235 and welcomes the recommendations contained therein. The Government of Ghana's Coordinated Programme of Economic and Social Development Policies (CPESDP) places people at the heart of development with the aim to create opportunities for all citizens, build and safeguard a resilient environment, maintain a stable, united and safe country and build a prosperous nation while upholding the national values of 'Freedom and Justice'. My delegation, therefore, welcomes the focus of the report on a people-centred approach to the rule of law at this time of global crises.

Madam Chairperson,

Ghana continues to make progress in the effectiveness and transparency of the regulatory framework and control of corruption. The appointment of a new Special Prosecutor and the retooling of the Office constitute a conscious effort by the Government to augment the existing anti-corruption institutional framework and to that end, promote good governance, transparency, probity and accountability in

Ghana's constitutional governance towards the attainment of national constitutional aspirations.

The Special Prosecutor is mandated to investigate and prosecute alleged corruption and corruption related offences, recover proceeds of corruption and take steps to prevent corruption in the private and public sectors.

Madam Chairperson,

In response to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic in the area of justice delivery, virtual court hearings are being progressively introduced as an innovative measure to ensure the timely hearing and disposal of summary proceedings before the courts.

The introduction of hearings in loco prisons under the 'Justice for All Programme' has further enhanced access to justice for inmates who have overstayed their warrants and aided in the decongestion of the prisons. The exercise of the prerogative of mercy and the grant of amnesty in 2020, pursuant to constitutional provisions, also afforded remission to some selected inmates.

Madam Chairperson,

Specific COVID-19 preventive and mitigation strategies are also being implemented within the criminal justice system through collaborative efforts among the relevant state agencies. The formation of the Prison Risk Communication Joint Health Committee to supervise sensitization campaigns and enforce adherence to safety protocols has helped to stem the transmission of the virus in Ghana's prisons. My delegation takes this opportunity to express appreciation to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for its support in providing, through the Ministry of Health, Personal Protection Equipment and medication to the Prisons Service.

Madam Chairperson,

The issue of overcrowding in prisons and correctional centers remains a challenge as inmates compete for limited resources. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, reinforces the need to explore alternative non-custodial sentencing and correctional measures. The current construction by Government of an 800-capacity remand prison and the construction of a total number of 600 capacity camp prisons across the country are intended to facilitate the decongestion of national prisons and uphold the rights and dignity of the inmates while in custody.

Madam Chairperson,

Regrettably, the COVID-19 pandemic has compounded gender inequalities and vulnerabilities and increased the risk of gender-based violence against women and children. Yet still, there is no justification for the surge in intimate partner abuse, sexual exploitation and domestic violence. Protecting the fundamental rights and freedoms of women and girls must remain a priority for all governments.

In Ghana, the domestic violence helpline activated by the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit in Partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has enabled many victims access timely police interventions.

Madam Chairperson,

The rule of law entails the equality and participation of women and girls and hence, upholding and advancing the rule of law requires the dismantling of discriminatory structures and barriers that compromise the full and effective participation of over half of the world's population, more so in post- COVID recovery.

Ultimately, the promotion of gender equality, gender mainstreaming and gender responsive institutions would be vital to build back better and resilient economies and the world we want.

Madam Chairperson,

In conclusion, allow me to echo Ghana's commitment to advance the rule of law both at the national level and within the multilateral and rule based international order.

I THANK YOU