



# NEPAL

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Statement to be delivered by Nepal at the 78<sup>th</sup> session of the Sixth Committee of the UN General Assembly on the theme '*Using technology to advance access to justice for all*' under Agenda Item 83: Rule of Law at the National and International Levels

(New York, October 16, 2023)

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**Mr. Chair,**

**(Seven Minutes)**

I thank you for holding thematic debate on this highly relevant subtopic under rule of law.

We appreciate the Secretary-General's comprehensive report under this agenda item.

I align my statement with the statement delivered on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

**Mr. Chair,**

Nepal reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the UN principles and purposes as enshrined in the Charter and to the, just, equitable and rule-based international system.

We believe that democracy, good governance, justice, sustained peace, and prosperity could flourish only in the ambience of the rule of law.

The United Nations's central role in maintenance of international peace and security, promotion of human rights, acceleration of socio-economic development, promotion of freedom and justice are firmly anchored to the principles of international rule of law.

Yet, growing political and social polarization, political instability, corruption, lack of good governance among others have aggravated the status of the rule of law globally, including the access to justice.

**Mr. Chair,**

Rule of law is the foundation for justice, opportunity, and peace—underpinning development, accountability, and respect for fundamental human rights.

Inaccessibility to justice incurs significant individual, community, and societal costs, with disproportionate impacts falling on poor, marginalized and vulnerable groups including women, children, and persons with disabilities.

Over the last few years, technology has increasingly been a much-hyped solution to address the justice gap. The use of technology has been a more efficient and effective option to e-filing as well as holding virtual or hybrid trial or hearing by digital exhibits and evidence presentation.

The wider accessibility of video conferencing and greater penetration of internet connectivity in remote areas has made it possible to the concerned to participate in a hearing or a trial without taking time off work and without spending much money and time in travelling to reach the courtroom.

Though COVID 19 pandemic catalyzed the wider adoption of innovation and transformative ICTs solutions in governance system, access to justice remains yet a major concern in most of the countries. Digital divide is a major impediment to its application in LDCs.

**Mr. Chair,**

We believe that well-informed adoption of breakthrough ICT solutions could resolve pressing justice issues and enhance access to a people-centered justice system.

Rule of law assistance and capacity-building, including for using technology, must be responsive to the ever-changing global landscape and people's needs. We should not fail to ensure people-centered justice delivery to all, both current and future generations.

Nepal welcomes the Secretary-General's New Vision for the Rule of Law, especially in using transformative e-justice technologies for enhancing accessibility and accountability of judicial systems, among others. We hope it will leverage the potential of technology for enhanced judicial transparency and accessibility for all.

Introduction of e-justice technologies should not fail to uphold the values of accessibility, legitimacy, legality, and economy of judicial systems.

Use of digital technologies must also be consistent with international human rights standards, fair trial, and privacy.

The rule of law must also exist in the digital sphere as it does in the material world. The development, deployment and responsible use of technologies should fully comply with the rule of law.

**Mr. Chair,**

Nepal has not only embraced the values of democracy, rule of laws, good governance, fundamental freedom, independent judiciary, and media freedom but also has enshrined these values in our democratic and inclusive constitution.

In fact, Rule of law is a fundamental element of our Constitution.

Separation of powers with proper check and balance, democratic accountability, basic human rights, equality and non-discrimination, and judicial remedies are deeply founded in the constitution.

National Human Rights Commission of Nepal is of 'A' status constitutional body with a commensurate mandate, competence, and independence for promotion, protection, and respect of human rights.

Our anti-corruption constitutional body, Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority, is dedicated to curbing corruption by aggressively employing lawful preventive, detective, investigative as well as punitive actions and strategies in any abuse of authority committed through corruption by any public office holder.

We are implementing international treaty obligations, including ending criminal impunity, organized crime, illicit financial flow, money-laundering, violent extremism, and terrorism.

Technologies also accelerate the achievement of SDG 16 through promotion of peaceful, and inclusive societies, justice, and robust institutions for sustainable development.

**Mr. Chair,**

Using technology to advance access to justice for all is a breakthrough solution to leave no-one behind.

UN support to Member States for addressing the digital divide remains vital. Capacity building through appropriate training remains equally important.

Member States should encourage the development and availability of resilient, user-friendly, accessible, and affordable technology to enhance judicial accessibility.

We commend UN bodies and initiatives in setting out norms and promoting rule of law at all levels.

Nepal stresses on inclusive and equitable participation of all Member States in global governance and financial institutions.

In conclusion, **Mr. Chair**, rule of law is the lifeline of democratic governance, social justice, and equitable development.

Let's join our hands in promoting rule of law, at all levels, by enhancing judicial accessibility with the use of technologies.

I thank you all.