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## SPECIAL LECTURE ON INTERNATIONAL ORDER AND RULE OF LAW IN TIMES OF SDGS

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It is a great honour to be invited to address you this evening, and would like to thank RIS and the Indian Law Institute for their hospitality. And it is a particular privilege for me to speak in the presence of Mr. Soli Sorabji, whom I've met first many, many years ago. I was actually trying to calculate and it's close to 37 years ago. I was then a young student at Harvard Law School, with his daughter Zia Mody, and Soli came as Solicitor General of India. And, since then of course, I have become a great admirer of his legal skills, and his commitment to the rule of law.

There are some other familiar faces in the room, too, and it gives me great pleasure to see so many of you here, because the issue that I am going to talk about, I believe is an incredibly important one, and one to which India has made a great contribution and can continue to do so.

Last week, I was in New York, at the opening of the UN General Assembly. And as one leader after another took the podium, three things were evident. First, the international order is in flux. Power is shifting from the West to the rest, but is yet to find an even keel. Second, we are living in dangerous times and in an endangered world. And third, the path forward lies through shared understanding and respect for human rights and the rule of law.

Geo-political tensions are at an all-time high. And amid the chest thumping and sabre rattling at the UN, the UN Secretary-General sounded a sombre warning that we are at the risk of "sleepwalking into war". Those were his exact words.

Entrenched conflicts, violent extremism and political turmoil are taking the toll on innocent people – civilians, women, children, the elderly, vulnerable groups, in blatant disregard of international humanitarian law, human rights and even human decency. Large scale migration and refugee flows have become the hallmark of our times.

Emerging powers like India are experiencing economic growth at a record level. But the prosperity is not equally distributed. And rising inequalities are creating new sources of discontent. Many people around the world, in developed as developing countries, feel left out and left behind. And their discontent is being manifest in troubling ways, including the radicalization of youth, hostility towards refugees and migrants, distrust of established institutions, and the rise of populist leaders.

A series of hurricanes and earthquakes in the Western Hemisphere this last week, has served to remind us of a different kind of anger, the anger of mother earth. But even as the time bomb of climate change keeps ticking on, the Paris Agreement is being trashed by the planet's key polluter. And the Indian Foreign Minister, in her statement at the General Assembly, rightly reminded us that peace means peace not only among human beings, but also peace with nature.

So, at a time when the international community seems divided and divisive, the international consensus on sustainable development gains even greater importance as a shared platform for

action. Just over two years, almost exactly two years ago on September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015, world leaders adopted what is arguably the most ambitious global development program ever, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, containing 17 SDGs or Sustainable Development Goals.

And unlike their predecessor, the Millennium Development Goals, which in fact, RIS in its publication has described, the Millennium Development Goals describe them as reductionist, narrow, and formulated primarily by donor countries of the Global North, while being imposed on countries of the Global South without prior consultation. The SDGs by comparison, are the products of extensive consultations at national, regional and international levels, with many governments and civil society, including India, playing an active role in forging this new agenda.

And, not surprisingly, the SDGs of course differ from the MDGs in a number of important ways. And this is in no small part due to the negotiating power of the new international order, or the emerging international order, I should say, which is asserting with increasing strength and success the interests of the Global South.

Let me highlight four features of the SDGs and I will focus on the fourth. The SDGs are universal, they are applicable to all countries, no matter where they lie on the development spectrum. It is symptomatic of a changing world order, but for the first time, the richest countries of the world are being held to the same standards of development as the poorest. The SDGs are comprehensive and interlinked. They cover all three pillars of sustainable development - economic, social and environmental - and they put forward an integrated vision of development for the first time ever. The interests of current generations to eradicate poverty and future generations to preserve fragile ecosystems and limited natural resources have to be aligned. Economic growth cannot be at any cost.

The SDGs seek systemic change. Unlike the MDGs, they are not about statistical results. They are about digging deeper into the questions and unfair systems at the international as well as national levels, to make development inclusive and empowering, so that no one would be left behind. Goal 10, for instance, talks about inequality among nations, as well as within countries.

As if this was all not ambitious enough, the SDGs go further and take up the thorny issue of good governance, and acknowledge that development cannot be sustainable, development cannot be sustained, without access to justice and the rule of law. And that idea is explicitly stated in Goal 16, but it is embedded implicitly in almost every other goal. And, it's very important to remember the cross-cutting nature of rule of law and access to justice. And by doing so, I think, we may be, we may have in front of us a game changer, providing of course, we handle it well.

The purpose of my lecture this evening is to look at that concept of rule of law and how it affects sustainable development. What is the rule of law? What is the relevance of the rule of law to sustainable development at national levels, at international levels, as Mr. Chaturvedi mentioned. What is the role that India can play as an emerging world power? The world's largest democracy and a country committed to respect for the rule of law. But also a country where more than a third of the world's poorest people live.

I will draw on the experience of my organization, the International Development Law Organization. It is the only intergovernmental organization in the world, which is devoted exclusively to promoting the rule of law and development. Our goal is, our mission is, to enable governments and empower people to reform laws and strengthen institutions, to advance peace, justice and sustainable development. We believe in legal pluralism, working with all legal systems

around the world. We also believe in local ownership and local partnership, and we always work closely with national and local authorities.

IDLO works in some of the poorest and most insecure parts of the world, in countries like Afghanistan, Somalia, South Sudan and Myanmar. But we are also increasingly working in emerging economies, emerging countries, emerging powers like Kenya, Mexico and Ukraine. And, I am here to open a dialogue with Indian institutions given India's tradition and commitment to the rule of law, to build partnerships and eventually hopefully, to have India as a member of IDLO.

In our experience, in IDLO's experience, no matter where in the development spectrum a particular country stands, maintaining peace, protecting the planet, eradicating poverty or encouraging economic opportunity, they all require good laws and regulations that are fairly administered by transparent and accountable institutions, and that, most importantly, produce fair outcomes for all people. And we see the rule of law as crucial and relevant to all three dimensions of development: economic, social or environmental. It is key to economic development because it provides for predictability and certainty through laws, a stable, transparent, legal regime. It promotes social development by ensuring equal opportunity and equitable access to basic services. And it protects the environment by regulating a fair and transparent and sustainable distribution and usage of natural resources.

Poverty eradication is the overriding aim of the SDGs. Insecurity and violence drive poverty and thrive where there is no rule of law. And that is not because the poor have a greater propensity for crime, but because laws and institutions very often fail to protect them. When the state does not have the capacity, or is not willing to protect people or their property, when women are left with no recourse against gender-based violence, or when institutions are not strong enough to resolve conflict or tackle organized crimes, and those are often the features of the poorest countries of the world, and the poorest neighbourhoods in some of the richest countries of the world.

Inequality is a major impediment to sustainable development. It grows when the rule of law does not function properly. When the law does not protect against discrimination, when opportunities are only open to a few based on wealth and privilege, when corruption and bribery deprive poor people of access to basic services, when big business interests override public interest, and when the law is selectively enforced in favour of the rich and powerful and against the poor. And I have seen this actually happening in some countries where tax fraud is ignored, but vagrancy laws are enforced rigorously.

For most poor people, the law is not a powering or protective force, but a means of oppression and exclusion. A source of harassment or bribes. Poor people don't trust laws, courts, institutions, police. Why should they turn to the law when the law rarely works in their favor? And too many poor people actually end up living outside the ambit of the law. And I say that as a lawyer.

Now, I spent 21 years, from 1980 to 2001, with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. And those years, I saw governments, developed countries as well as developing countries, shut down borders, push back refugees, fine airlines to deter them from carrying asylum seekers, detain asylum seekers in hard conditions. And there are plenty of international treaties and national laws to protect refugees. But refugees often find themselves in a legal no man's land without access to justice. And unless institutions uphold laws, rights cannot be protected. Now let me hasten to add that India is not a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention and has no refugee laws. But in practice, it has shown more generosity to refugees, including millions of them from my own country, Bangladesh, in 1971, than many other states that do have laws. I was Chief of Mission here with

UNHCR in the late 90s and I saw how it worked in practice. So, as the Indian courts consider the case of the Rohingyas from Myanmar, I hope that same spirit of compassion and humanitarianism will prevail.

As Secretary General of Amnesty International, I found myself confronting the US-led war of terror in which the world's most powerful government locked people up indefinitely without charge or trial, engaged in water-boarding and other torture tactics and carried out extraordinary renditions with impunity. Now some of the detainees in Guantanamo fought the US government in the Supreme Court and won their case. But even strong institutions have their limits when there is no political will to respect the rule of law.

Now let me tell you the story of Rosie! It's a true story, but I am not going to tell you in which country Rosie lived. Because it doesn't really matter. There are too many Rosies in the world, and this story of Rosie could have happened in South Asia, as much as in Southern Africa. Now, I never met Rosie, but I heard about her when I visited a counselling centre for women victims of violence, in a country that had just introduced a new law to combat domestic violence. And this law is one of the best drafted laws in this area, and I had actually gone to that country in order to study that law. And the local government had set up a counselling center for women who wished to use the law, submit the complaint to the police and get a protection order. And the counsellor, in that counselling center, explained to me how easy it was to do that, no hassle, no cost, very simple. And then she told me about Rosie.

A poor woman, with five young children, no job, no education, a victim of domestic violence. On pay day her husband would come home, get drunk, come home and then beat her up. He did that several times, she was hospitalized with injuries, and then one day he beat her so badly that she actually died. So I asked the counsellor, why hadn't Rosie sought a protection order from the magistrate? What was wrong with the law? And the counsellor replied, there is nothing wrong with the law, Rosie didn't have the money for the bus fare to get to the magistrate's court.

So, if my experience with UNHCR and Amnesty International showed me that law can too often bend to political will, Rosie's case taught me that even good, well-meaning laws and institutions can fail to provide justice if they are disconnected from the lived experience of poor people. If the rule of law is to be a pathway to sustainable development, then, in the words of Professor Harold Berman, "justice based on law must give way to law based on justice".

Now, Amartya Sen, in his book *The Idea of Justice*, rejects this, what he calls, "transcendental approach" to justice, which concentrates primarily on getting the institutions right. He champions a comparative approach to justice, addressing injustice where we see around us, rather than trying to create a perfect state of justice, on realizing justice in societies than focusing on institutions and rules.

And, in the words of Professor Sen, "the question to ask is whether the demands of justice must be only about getting the institutions and rules right? Or, should we not also have to examine what does emerge in the society, the kinds of lives that people actually lead". He says, "justice cannot be indifferent to the lives of people".

Now, justice is people-centered. It is about creating fair outcomes and an inclusive society. The rule of law, on the other hand, is state-centered. It is about institutions and governance, the application of norms, procedures and regulations. The rule of law is a highly complex concept, and even lawyers struggle with defining it properly. And it is inherently political concept because it involves values, choices about justice, governance, accountability and rights. And, so, it is not

surprising that there is no one universally agreed definition of the rule of law. And that is of course in itself a problem as we look at the SDGs.

Now, at a minimum, the lowest common denominator definition of the rule of law would be of a system of rules and institutions to constrain the arbitrary exercise of power. And in this minimalist definition of the rule of law, laws must be clear, prospective and capable of being followed, impartially applied and equally enforced by institutions. The key features are predictability, clarity, legality and due process. Very often, however, this turns out to be not rule of law, but rule by law.

Now, the UN Secretary-General offers a broader definition of the rule of law, which is closer to the concept of the rule of law in most democratic societies, including India. And he defines it as “a principle of governance in which all persons, institutions and entities, public and private, including the State itself, are accountable to laws that are publicly promulgated, equally enforced and independently adjudicated and which are consistent with international human rights norms and standards”.

In this definition, the rule of law guarantees the protection of the full range of human rights and provides to citizens and non-citizens legitimate avenues of recourse in case of abuse of power. And in that sense, the rule of law actually operationalizes human rights. The relationship, that relationship, between the rule of law and human rights, is important, otherwise human rights are nothing but paper promises.

Now, human rights are of course constraints on state power, for instance by prohibiting torture or restricting free speech, or stopping the restriction on free speech. But, they are also enablers for state action, for instance, providing, putting a duty on the state to provide education, or health care, or housing. They are effectively claims that the weak advance to hold the powerful to account, and they empower and confer dignity on poor people, on the marginalized.

Now, the UN’s understanding of the rule of law is what we, in IDLO, follow. It contains, as you see, both procedural as well as substantive elements of justice. Now, India has an independent and internationally well-respected judiciary, with a reputation for upholding the rights of the marginalized and vulnerable, and providing remedies for violations. And, many Indian decisions on economic and social rights have been hailed globally. Now, India’s best, and I say this, because what is most surprising is, of course, under the Indian Constitution, economic and social rights are not framed as rights, but as principles of policy. And, yet, the court has read those principles, in a way linking them to the right to life, and has given them life. Has given them real life and reality, and this takes me back to what Amartya Sen said about looking around and see what is needed to be done in terms of justice and to do it. And, I think the Indian Supreme Court did that.

Now, India’s best known public interest litigation is the right to food case. Over two decades, the court monitored every government’s scheme related to food, both at state and central levels, even appointing its own officers to explain what was actually happening in the courtroom. And then the National Food Security Act which came in 2013 was partially as a result of that judicial scrutiny. It shows how laws and institutions can have a tremendous force for protecting the rights of those living in poverty.

Now, more recently, we’ve seen the decision of the Indian Supreme Court in March 2013 to reject the patent application by Novartis, the international pharmaceutical firm, for its cancer drug, Gleevec, on the grounds that the company was “evergreening” an earlier drug. And so it rejected Novartis’ application, and the court used Indian legislation, as well as the flexibility in the TRIPS

Agreement – this is the trade-related intellectual property rights agreement – to take into account the social objectives of health care of Indian people.

And as a result of that court decision, taking away the application that Novartis was trying to enforce on intellectual property, millions of poor people in India are able to access the drug that they badly needed, but could not otherwise have afforded. So, are the interests of a large multinational pharmaceutical company to continue to make profit from essential medicines to be put on par with the needs of those who are too poor to buy essential drugs? And, the Supreme Court, of course, rightly decided not.

Now, in the court of law a poor man or woman has no more rights than a rich man. Now, as Anatole France, the French journalist, poet and novelist, famously said in 1894, “the rich as well as the poor are forbidden to sleep under the bridges of Paris”. But, the law sometimes, when it dispenses equality, needs to take into account – as the Supreme Court did in the Novartis case – the asymmetry of power. And poverty is about powerlessness.

We say, of course, the law is blind. But legal blindness to power dynamics can be dangerous. Look at the situation of women, for example, and here I am going to give you an example from the international level. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which the United Nations adopted in 1948, which is the kind of apex document on human rights, is gender blind. Makes no reference to the different ways in which men and women experience human rights. And as a result, for many years, the international community ignored the issue of gender discrimination or sexual and gender-based violence.

It took the women’s groups, the women’s movement, 30 years of mobilization before the UN adopted the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women in 1979. And, another 16 years before the Beijing Platform for Action on Gender Equality came into being. Now, another little side line, side fact, trivia if I may put it that way, is that whereas the UN Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination took six years or so to come into being, the one on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women took about 50 years. So, make what you will of that!

Now, but I think, the women’s movement and the gender conventions that came into being, show that like laws and courts and state institutions, social movements also have a great role to play in making the rule of law work for everyone. Civil society is an important actor in making the rule of law work for sustainable development.

Now, sustainable development require the balancing of diverse interests. Hard choices have to be made on how to distribute the benefits and burdens of development. Take the Narmada Dam case. The Supreme Court was confronted on the one hand, with India’s growing needs for reliable water, and on the other, by the rights of people who were being ousted from their land. But, unlike the Novartis case, where the Supreme Court took a clear stand, backed by national and international law, in the Narmada ruling, I would say the Supreme Court basically hid behind a technicality and ducked a proper analysis of the issues.

Now, the former Ambassador and now Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, the chair of RIS, often says, that just as the success of MDGs rested on China’s anti-poverty efforts, the success of the SDGs will be determined by India’s ability to lift its poor people out of poverty. One third of the world’s poor, about 400 million people live in India. And India is pursuing a strategy of industrialization and economic growth to eradicate poverty. Without growth, there can be no development. But, of course, not all growth leads to development. So, what kind of trade-offs should India make, or,

can India make? How will it decide what is equitable or not? Whose voices will be heard? How open and participatory will the decisions be? When disputes arise, how well will they be adjudicated among parties with different levels of power and influence?

These are precisely the kinds of questions that a well-developed system of the rule of law can help to address. And so the imperatives of poverty eradication should not be considered to be in opposition to or isolated from the principles of sustainable development and the rule of law. On the contrary, the SDGs require an integrated approach to development. So, it is about sustainable development, economic development and environmental protection, but it is also about respecting the rule of law and promoting equity and fairness.

Constitutions, laws and courts matter, but so do, and I would say possibly even more so, the values of justice, inclusion and equal protection at all levels of State and society. Last night I was having a conversation with one of your leading lawyers and he talked about the values of Indian culture, history, going back thousands of years of communal support, of communities supporting each other. And, it is those values that actually go to build the rule of law. The Constitution is a piece of paper with a few words on it. And, what's much more important and how that Constitution will survive decades, possibly centuries, is about those embedded values of society.

Where the rule of law works well, "it is not indifferent to the lives of people", to use the words from Amartya Sen. And, through rules and institutions, the rule of law seeks to correct the imbalance of power. And, in that sense, the rule of law actually provides an ethical framework for the SDGs. You know, the balancing of interests, inter-generational interests as well as intra-generational interests, requires transparent, rule-based processes and mechanisms that can ensure appropriate, inclusive and equitable arrangements, acceptable to all. And, broadly speaking, that is the real value that the rule of law offers to sustainable development.

So, as I said, the rule of law is a legal concept, but it is also a political construct. It is about how societies are organized and how power is exercised. And understanding the political economy of the rule of law is very important. The nature of reforms, their impact on diverse interests, the power dynamics that drive or hinder the reforms – all that is extremely essential to understand if we are to advance sustainable development.

Now, the rule of law takes decades, if not centuries, to get hold, to take hold in a society. And, too often, international actors, and I say that as head of one of those international actors, too often, we seek to hurry things up because we have no time. We have to report on results. Our donors are putting pressure on us. And, what we tend to do very often is take legal implants from one country to another. Too often, I would say, governments treat these kinds of reforms as technical exercises. Neither is right. And, I think, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development gives us an opportunity to share experiences, and to invest in institutions as well as in the empowerment of citizens. To take a new approach to development. And, I believe, India's experience will be invaluable, not only for people in India, but also in other countries.

Now, IDLO, my organization, has worked for 30 years in some 85 countries, including post-conflict states, transition economies and middle income countries. And, let me draw three points from that experience, very briefly.

First, if development policies and legal reforms are to be sustainable, they cannot be dictated by outsiders. They have to be locally owned and locally driven. The justice-making, particularly the justice-making effort, the legal systems of each country is unique. It's deeply rooted in their specific history, politics, jurisprudence, values, customs, traditions. Understanding the local

context is critical to the success of any reform. And, in building local ownership, it is important to ensure inclusive participation – this can be very politically sensitive. My organization works in a lot of post-conflict countries, where, of course, the conflict itself, was the result of a power struggle among different groups. So, including them all in the legal process can be difficult because the winners may not want the losers in that process. But, it's extremely important that happens, and sometimes, external facilitation can help that process.

Working with people to make things change. Now, in Uganda, we have devised co-creation workshops. We are looking at community justice at the grassroots level, looking at local authorities, looking at informal justice. Co-creation – we sit down with them and it is these various partners that actually design the work that has to be done. Our presence simply ensures that everyone is included.

Mali is another country recovering from years of armed conflict. Very poor. And there we have worked with an innovative methodology called “program driven iterative adaptation”. Sounds very complicated! But, effectively what it means – listening to people, getting them to finalize the problems, getting them to then draw up the solutions, getting them to work on it, and then getting them to revise it as they work and as problems emerge.

My second point would be that successful reforms for sustainable development need both a top-down and a bottom-up approach. And, that means, legal empowerment, strategies, alongside institutional and legal reforms.

Yesterday, I was at a meeting with a civil society groups, and a lady there described to me the legal awareness program that her organization runs for women's groups. And she talked about these women who had never read the Constitution and how their faces lit up when they read the preamble of the Indian Constitution, which by the way, is a very uplifting document, as we all know. And, these women, with not very high levels of education, how empowered they felt that the Constitution itself gave them these rights. In the same room was a very seasoned elderly constitutional lawyer who felt bitter about the Constitution, who felt that perhaps the Constitution was not being applied and used in a proper way. And, this lady from the NGO showed us the difference between people on the ground who see the Constitution as an enabling and empowering instrument. And, whereas, of course, seasoned lawyers may feel otherwise.

I won't have time to tell you about the work that we are doing in places like Afghanistan with women's groups, helping them to address issues of gender-based violence, working with women's shelter networks, with legal aid networks, but also with the Government, building prosecution units that can prosecute for gender-based crimes.

Now, my third point is that most people actually don't access justice through courts, or formal means. Most people actually, for them courts are too expensive, too remote, too time consuming, too far away. And, people turn to informal or customary ways of resolving conflicts. Now, these customary systems are very good and effective, but they do have their defects as well, especially when it comes to discrimination against women or against minorities. The power-play works out at the community level, exactly the same way as it does in the broader society, and sometimes even worse.

And, yet, there is very little interest actually shown by most governments, or by international actors, in what actually is happening on the ground. And, this is an area that more attention needs to be given.



And, my final point I want to make is, to come back to what Professor Chaturvedi was talking about, the relationship between the international rule of law and the national rule of law. The Novartis case that I mentioned is a positive example of that relationship. Because the Supreme Court used the flexibility in the World Trade Organization's TRIPS Agreement to rule against Novartis.

Now, the international legal and institutional frameworks for trade, investment, intellectual property, technology transfer are very important for sustainable development. But, power, or rather the lack of it, can tilt interest just as they do in national situations, also at the international level. And, developing countries like India have been a leading voice, have long called for fairer international rule to create a more equitable, inclusive and sustainable model of development.

And because of this uneven balance of arms, have taken steps, as you mentioned, to terminate bilateral investment treaties, because they feel they are no longer appropriate. Now, last Friday at the UN General Assembly, IDLO and the UN jointly launched a program, an investment support program for LDCs, the least developed countries, to strengthen their capacity to negotiate contracts and settle disputes through arbitration. And, I have rarely seen so much interest from all sides, everyone who was in the room, talking about how important it was to strengthen the legal capacity of these least developed countries to be able to negotiate properly, complex contracts, investment contracts.

And, last week, we launched this program and I hope that this program will be the basis of South-South Cooperation. Because, this is exactly the kind of place where India, with its own experience, how it has dealt with investors, investment treaties, complex contracts, can share that experience with other countries.

Now, international negotiations on climate change, as you know, India has advocated for equity and fairness, and arguing that there should be, yes, everyone has responsibilities, common responsibilities, but differentiated responsibility. And that, as the Global North has contributed more to global problems such as climate change, they should do more. And I was very pleased to hear Prime Minister Modi actually use the term 'climate justice' in his statement at the sustainable development summit in 2015. Because this term 'climate justice' was coined by the Mary Robinson Foundation for Climate Justice, on which I was a trustee until very recently and stepped down because my term came to an end. And, we devised that term, because we wanted to show that justice has to be done in the context of sustainable development, where those who do the greatest damage should also pay more and should understand the unevenness of issues.

And this is the real problem of sustainable development. Constantly you see people with less power and people, or entities, with more power. How do you balance the two? And this is where rule of law comes in, because a rule based system can allow you to manage those diverse interests, well.

So, to conclude let me say the rule of law helps to create the conditions for development by establishing their appropriate legal framework and the institutions. Secondly, it provides transparency and equity to the development process. It brings accountability and recourse mechanisms. And third, even playing a role in imposing them.

So, today, India is a confident and active player on the global stage, participating in G20 and BRICS. And that reflects a changing nature of global power. India's taking a more active role regionally, as well. And also across its bilateral relations.

Now, I am told and I don't know whether this fact is correct, that India's Foreign Service is about the size, the same size as that of Singapore. But, I can only say, the quality is making up for quantity. But, given the country's democratic and legal traditions, I hope India will try, by inspiration and by example, to contribute to this international discourse on the rule of law. And, I hope that India will participate actively, within IDLO as well, as a partner, as a member in the not too distant future.

At times when the international order is in flux, we are living in a time when the international order is in flux, some states are advocating unilateral approaches, others are trying to shape the international system in their own image, multilateralism risks falling into crisis. And India's leadership, in shaping a rule based multipolar model of international relations based on mutual respect and universal standards of human rights, could be critical.

Now, the success, of course, of any legal regime depends on whether the powerful follow the same rules as everyone else. And, as India seeks a greater voice in shaping global rules and norms, its own willingness to uphold those same principles at home and abroad will be important, not just for India, but also for the legitimacy and effectiveness of the international order that India wants to shape.

So, as the head of the world's only intergovernmental organization with an exclusive mandate to promote the rule of law and development, let me invite Indian institutions and organizations to partner with us in our global work. We at IDLO hope to have India as a partner in the quest for a future that is just, inclusive, and which every person can live with dignity and under the rule of law.

Thank you!

**Watch the video:** <http://www.idlo.int/news/multimedia/videos/international-order-and-rule-law-times-sdgs>