

NOBEL LAUREATE YUNUS LINKS RULE OF LAW AND POVERTY ERADICATION; JOINS IDLO ADVISORY COUNCIL

(Rome, Italy) May 11, 2016 – “The underlying issues that the poor face in the finance sector can teach us valuable lessons for the justice sector: in many places, the law serves only the people who can afford it,” said Professor Muhammad Yunus, who received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006 for his pioneering work on microcredit and women’s empowerment.

“Just as poor people have the right to access credit, they have a right to access justice”, noted Professor Yunus, underlying the need for legal reforms to protect the rights of poor people.

Professor Yunus was speaking at an event at the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) in Rome, on the occasion of his joining IDLO’s International Advisory Council, a select body of eminent personalities who provide high-level counsel to the Organization.

“Our association with Professor Yunus reflects IDLO’s commitment to create a culture of justice for all,” said Irene Khan, IDLO Director-General. “Through innovative legal reform, the poor can find social as well as legal justice.”

“The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has put justice and the rule of law firmly at the heart of development”, noted Ms. Khan.

Other high-level participants at the event included H.E. Benedetto della Vedova, Undersecretary of State at the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, and H.E. Pier Ferdinando Casini, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee at the Italian Senate. Both speakers emphasized the 2030 Agenda and the important connection between Professor Yunus’ message and IDLO’s work around the world, noting that sustainable development cannot exist without democracy, rule of law and accountable institutions.

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Note to Editors

The International Development Law Organization (IDLO) is the only intergovernmental organization exclusively devoted to promoting the rule of law. IDLO works to enable governments and empower people to reform laws and strengthen institutions to promote peace, justice, sustainable development and economic opportunity. Its programs, research and policy advocacy cover the spectrum of rule of law from peace and institution building to social development and economic recovery in countries emerging from conflict and striving towards democracy.

IDLO has its headquarters in Rome, a Branch Office in The Hague, liaison offices for the United Nations in New York and Geneva, and country offices in Afghanistan, Honduras, Indonesia, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Mali, Mongolia, Myanmar, Somalia, South Sudan and Tajikistan.

IDLO’s International Advisory Council is composed of eminent personalities from the field of law and development. They are:

- **Dr. Abdel-Latif Al-Hamad**, Chairman and CEO of the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development
- **Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago**, Senate of the Philippines
- **President Abdou Diouf**, Former President of the Republic of Senegal and Secretary General of the International Organization of La Francophonie
- **William H. Gates Sr.**, Co-Chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
- **Thomas Pickering**, Former United States Ambassador and former Assistant Secretary of State for Political Affairs
- **President Mary Robinson**, Former President of the Republic of Ireland, former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and President of the Mary Robinson Foundation - Climate Justice
- **Justice Albie Sachs**, Former Justice of the Constitutional Court of South Africa
- **Prof Muhammad Yunus**, 2006 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate