

---

## STATEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LAW ORGANIZATION (IDLO)

37<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL: ITEM 8, GENERAL DEBATE

Room XX, Palais des Nations

March 20, 2018

Geneva

*Delivered by Julian Fleet*

*Permanent Observer to the UN and other International Organizations in Geneva, IDLO*

Mr. President,  
Distinguished Delegates,

The Preamble of the Charter of the United Nations makes clear that the rule of law is at the heart of the work of the United Nations.

As we mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (VDPA), it is fitting to recall that the rule of law features very prominently in that Declaration and in the principles set out by the World Conference on Human Rights in 1993.

In Sustainable Development Goal 16 and the 2030 Agenda, UN Member States have cast rule of law as both a goal, in and of itself, and an essential driver of peace, inclusion, development and human rights.

Today, it is more widely understood that the rule of law requires fair rules and procedures, but ultimately is about fair outcomes: justice, equality, non-discrimination.

From IDLO's experience helping governments and civil society partners to strengthen rule of law institutions and access to justice in countries, we have seen that concrete progress requires both political will and, importantly, institutional capacity.

As IDLO's Director-General Irene Khan said in her recent address to the Council's High-Level Segment: "If we are to realize the vision of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Council must call for greater attention to be given to strengthening the rule of law and building the capacity of the justice sector at national and local levels to uphold human rights – economic, social and cultural, as well as civil and political rights."

Twenty-five years ago, the World Conference on Human Rights set a practical way forward when it called for greater cooperation and technical assistance for strengthening rule of law and the administration of justice, including increased resources to build and strengthen institutions with a direct impact on "the legal protection of human rights". (VDPA, para. 67-68)

Greater investment in international cooperation, technical assistance and building rule of law and justice capacities in countries and communities around the world is essential if the vision of the Vienna Declaration for concrete action to operationalize human rights is to be fulfilled.

Mr. President,

The International Development Law Organization (IDLO) this year marks its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary working with government and civil society partners on the ground, promoting rule of law and access to justice in countries in every region of the world.

We look forward to further strengthening our collaboration with the Rule of Law Group, the Core Group on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law, and the Council at large, to maximize the value and potential of rule of law in the service of human rights.

Thank you.

*The International Development Law Organization (IDLO) enables governments and empowers people to reform laws and strengthen institutions to promote peace, justice, sustainable development and economic opportunity.*