

## STATEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LAW ORGANIZATION

34<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL  
ANNUAL HIGH-LEVEL PANEL DISCUSSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS MAINSTREAMING  
THEME: THE CONTRIBUTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS TO PEACEBUILDING

Room XX, Palais des Nations

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Geneva

*Delivered by Julian Fleet, Permanent Observer, IDLO*

### Check against delivery

Mr. President,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

The International Development Law Organization (IDLO) is grateful for this opportunity to address the Council, and we thank you, Deputy High Commissioner Gilmore and this eminent panel for the rich and inspiring discussion this afternoon.

The Council's choice of theme this year is especially significant at a time when sources of violent conflicts are proliferating and human rights are under renewed threat in every region of the world.

As an intergovernmental organization devoted to advancing the rule of law, IDLO works to enable governments, empower people and strengthen institutions to realize justice, peace and sustainable development. Our technical assistance and capacity development programs are often in countries emerging from conflict. So, it is from the perspective of a field-based multilateral organization that we make our comments today.

Nearly seventy years ago, the drafters of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights acknowledged the centrality of rule of law by noting in the Preamble that that it is essential for peace and security QUOTE "that human rights should be **protected by the rule of law.**"

The rule of law can contribute to preventing conflict and building peace in a number of ways, by:

- Providing predictability, clarity, fairness and certainty in the exercise of government power and in social interaction;
- Ensuring constitutional and legal reforms are fair, inclusive, and uphold human rights;
- Establishing an independent, competent judiciary with integrity;
- Ensuring that security and law enforcement agencies respect human rights; and
- Most important, ensuring access to justice and equality under the law for all, including those most at risk of discrimination and harm, such as children, women, minorities, refugees and displaced persons.

Such an understanding and approach to rule of law is key to both conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

Negotiating peace accords and political agreements to end conflict are the first step to creating conditions for stability, but in themselves are not enough to sustain peace. What matters eventually are effective laws and institutions that provide justice – both legal and social – in a fair

and transparent manner, and by doing so, restore peoples' trust and confidence in their government.

Our experience on the ground shows that national ownership is key to successful institution-building. It means being respectful of local needs and legal pluralism, but at the same time ensuring international human rights standards and principles are fully respected and upheld.

Investing in the rule of law is one of the most important building blocks for sustainable peace.

Sustainable Development Goal 16, as a driver of good governance, accountable institutions, access to justice and the rule of law, cuts across all the SDGs in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is also an essential ingredient for binding sustainable development with durable peace.

As the United Nations reviews its capacity and resources to sustain peace, IDLO stands ready to further strengthen its cooperation with Member States, the UN Human Rights Council and OHCHR -- to place rule of law and access to justice at the heart of efforts to prevent conflict and build peace.

*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.*