

## STATEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LAW ORGANIZATION

HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON SOMALIA

September 25, 2019

New York

*Delivered by Irene Khan, Director-General, IDLO*

Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

For the past seven years, the International Development Law Organization has been working in Somalia to support the Somali people and government to reform laws, strengthen institutions and improve access to justice. As an organization working on the ground, we have seen the progress that has been made but also the challenges that need to be addressed.

Supporting initiatives to enhance the collaboration between the Federal Government and its member states is a priority as Somalia navigates a complex and challenging process of state-building and sustaining peace.

In this context, we would like to highlight the continued importance of prioritizing and investing in justice sector reforms and legal reforms.

Speaking from our experience around the world and also in Somalia, such reforms cannot be dictated by outsiders but must be locally owned and driven in the broadest and most inclusive sense of the word.

All IDLO's programs in Somalia are designed in close collaboration with the government institutions and citizen groups.

Through our office in Mogadishu, we are working to build the capacity of institutions, including the Ministry of Justice, the Attorney General's Office and the Judiciary, and to develop and revise laws and policies to tackle issues such as gender-based violence, violent extremism and corruption.

We maximize the use of local capacity by embedding qualified experts from the Somali diaspora in the justice institutions and by working with local civil society as implementing partners.

We have also partnered with the Ministry of Justice to engage with informal systems, used by most people in Somalia. We are supporting the Ministry to bring the traditional *Xeer* system in line with Somalia's draft constitution and help communities resolve conflicts through restorative justice solutions.

Building the rule of law takes time, vision and sustained effort but it is one of the most important investments in Somalia's future. We appreciate the commitment of the Somali government and the generous investment of the international community in the justice sector and pledge our continued support to building a more peaceful, just and inclusive society in Somalia.

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.*