



STATEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LAW ORGANIZATION

**UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL COMMITTEE (2ND COMMITTEE)
GENERAL DEBATE: “BUILDING BACK BETTER AFTER COVID-19: ENSURING A MORE
EQUITABLE GLOBAL ECONOMY, INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES AND SUSTAINABLE RECOVERY”**

9 October 2020

New York

Delivered by Patrizio Civili, Permanent Observer to the United Nations, IDLO

Check against delivery

Mr. Chairman,

The theme that has been chosen for the current session of the Committee and the emphasis that the theme places on objectives of equity, inclusion and sustainability are at the heart of IDLO’s work in pursuing its mandate to advance the rule of law in support of peace and sustainable development. These objectives are also at the center of IDLO’s engagement with the United Nations, as an active member of the General Assembly’s “observer” community and an active operational partner of the UN development system. And they are central to our current initiatives to leverage the rule of law as a pathway toward a sustainable recovery from the pandemic — initiatives that we are consciously pursuing as a contribution to the global response to the pandemic that the UN and this Assembly are leading.

In revealing that no country, rich or poor, is immune to this crisis and its devastating impact, COVID-19 has laid bare the consequences of under-performance in governance and under-investment in justice. By exposing entrenched inequalities at both the national and international levels and the conditions of injustice, discrimination, and insecurity that are such an important part of our shared fragility, COVID-19 has clearly pointed to the directions of the transformational change we need to bring about.

At IDLO, we seek to advance the rule of law as a principle of governance at the national but equally the international level, and as a driver of justice and, as such, a key agent of sustainability.

IDLO’s conviction of the key role that progress toward the rule of law can make in sustaining peace and development draws on evidence provided by over 30 years of operational experience. And it is firmly anchored in the policy consensus reflected in Agenda 2030 — through SDG 16, but also SDGs 5 and 10 and, more generally, by incorporating principles of equity and equality across all the SDGs. In the face of the evidence brought about by the pandemic, acting on this consensus has become more urgent than ever.

During the past months our focus has been on supporting our program countries and more generally on advocating for responses to the pandemic that would prioritize equitable access to public services and extend to all the protection of the law. We have been doing so aware that public confidence in institutions of governance and their fairness in service delivery is such a critical factor in the effectiveness in a country's response, and in the conviction that putting justice and the rule of law at the heart of the response from its inception will be key to moving toward a sustainable recovery.

It is in this spirit that IDLO has launched the Crisis Governance Forum as a multi-stakeholder online platform to exchange policy-making experiences in the response to the pandemic. Following the launch of the [Forum](#) in July, we chose to devote the first thematic session held last week to the key theme of equitable access to [health services and products](#). The imperative of universal health coverage was one of the debate's main leitmotifs.

National experiences of countries ranging from Honduras to Kenya, from Costa Rica to Uganda were projected at both events by senior policy makers at the forefront of their governments' response to the pandemic. Their first-hand accounts were accompanied by presentations by the UN, relevant agencies, and international policy makers and experts on the state of global policy development, leading to an interactive dialogue focusing on lessons learned and their relevance in shaping subsequent recovery phases.

Let me also bring to the Committee's attention the [Policy Brief](#) that IDLO published earlier this month with recommendations on priority actions to strengthen the legal and policy framework for managing the pandemic; mitigate the impact of the crisis especially on marginalized groups; and strengthen resilience to future crises.

Two basic orientations are guiding IDLO in shaping, through the programs it will pursue in the period ahead, a distinct contribution to the global effort toward a sustainable recovery from COVID-19.

One is to ensure that IDLO's ongoing operational programs are adjusted to meet new needs emerging from the pandemic. This effort ranges from promoting innovations in the functioning of the justice systems that have been hit so hard by the pandemic, to enhancing legal and policy support to countries in addressing the impact of the pandemic on their economic development and trade and investment relations, with special attention to the particular situation and needs of different groups of countries such as the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and the Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs).

A second is to leverage IDLO's legal expertise in partnership with UN agencies directly engaged in addressing the health, food security, and climate justice implications of the pandemic; and in support of the UN system's effort to address the needs of vulnerable groups such as migrants.

We have sought to convey IDLO's commitment to do its part in the global response to the pandemic at the High-Level Meetings that the General Assembly has held in the past several days, including those in commemoration of the 25th Anniversary of the Beijing Conference and for the observance of 75th Anniversary of the United Nations, where IDLO's Director-General called for a recommitment to global solidarity and to the

principles of justice and the rule of law that were so deeply engrained in the UN Charter and must provide now a foundation on which to build a sustainable recovery from COVID-19.

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.