

**43rd SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL
HIGH-LEVEL PANEL DISCUSSION COMMEMORATING THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE BEIJING DECLARATION AND PLATFORM FOR ACTION ADOPTED AT THE FOURTH
WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN**

**Remarks by Jan Beagle, Director-General
International Development Law Organization (IDLO)**

Room XX, Palais des Nations, Geneva
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Twenty-five years after the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPFA), it is time to prioritise the rule of law as a critical enabler for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

As a participant in the Beijing Conference myself, I can testify that, while we envisaged the important progress that has been made, we did not fully appreciate the resistance and the challenges that lay ahead and persist to this day.

The International Development Law Organization (IDLO) works at global and national levels in partnership with governments, civil society and the United Nations system, to promote the rule of law, including concrete programs to enhance justice for women and girls.

Our research, and our programming experience in countries, has demonstrated the persistent justice gap between women and men, and the limited investment in the rule of law.

It has also shown how investment in the rule of law and access to justice can make a real difference in the lives of women and girls.

For example, in Afghanistan we have supported the Attorney General's Office in establishing specialised units to investigate and prosecute gender-based violence. Today there are functioning units in all provinces of the country.

In Liberia, a special court has been established to deal exclusively with sexual offenses. This has resulted in a very significant increase in the number of cases reaching the formal justice system.

We are also working to promote and protect women's human rights in customary and informal justice systems; to remove barriers to the participation of women justice professionals; and with UN Women, to identify and repeal laws that discriminate against women and girls.

We look forward to collaborating with all partners to scale up innovative solutions, and to increase investment in the rule of law for the empowerment of all women and girls.

I would like to ask the panel:

- How can we accelerate mobilisation of commitment and investment in the rule of law and access to justice for women and girls?

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.