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## PRESS RELEASE

### IMPLEMENTATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS MUST FOCUS ON RIGHTS HOLDERS:

#### IDLO HOSTS FIRST DEBATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF SDGS

*Rome, November 24, 2015* - Two months after the United Nations approved the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - which for the first time explicitly recognize the rule of law as both an enabler and an outcome of sustainable development - the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) facilitated today its first consultation on how to bring them to life.

“The Sustainable Development Goals place IDLO’s mandate and values firmly and squarely on the international agenda,” said the Organization’s Director-General Irene Khan introducing discussions as part of IDLO’s annual Assembly of Parties, which took place in Rome, Italy.

Two panels - which included ministers, diplomats, academics, UN and civil society experts as well as representatives from donor countries and international institutions - examined challenges and opportunities for implementation of the SDGs at the national level and looked at what the international community can contribute to national efforts.

Panelists presented experiences from countries in which IDLO has been active supporting rule of law and access to justice initiatives, including Afghanistan, Honduras, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Somalia and Tunisia. Many pointed to the need to create an enabling environment for the rule of law, which includes building strong institutions and fostering inclusion.

“Today’s discussions reaffirmed some of the core principles IDLO applies in its work, including the need to root the rule of law in local contexts, focus on the end-users of justice, and promote local ownership and participation,” Director-General Khan noted.

“The supply of justice improves when the demand for justice increases,” she added, echoing repeated statements on the need to create an inclusive environment for the rule of law to flourish, including through initiatives to promote legal literacy and rights awareness.

Concluding the 2015 meeting of its Assembly of Parties, IDLO launched a consultation process to design its Strategic Plan 2017 - 2020. As donors and other actors in the international community are considering how best to reflect the SDGs in their development policies, programs and budgets, the consultation will provide an important opportunity to engage with them on how the rule of law can be embedded in the implementation of the SDGs and how IDLO might best contribute to their realization.

#### **Background**

##### Speakers

H. E. Abdullahi Jama, Minister of Justice, Somali Federal Government

H. E. Zylidy Zheenbaevna Mambetalieva, Minister of Justice, Kyrgyz Republic

Honorable Justice Joel Ngugi, Judge of the High Court and Head of the Judicial Transformation Framework, Kenya

Mr. Mendsaikhan Tumenjargal, Executive Secretary, Judicial General Council, Mongolia

Dr. Soukeina Bouraoui, Executive Director, Center of Arab Women for Training and Research, Tunisia

H.E Maria del Carmen Nasser de Ramos, Vice Minister of Cooperation and Social Promotion, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Honduras

H.E. Said Jawad, Senior Political and Foreign Policy Advisor to the Chief Executive of Afghanistan

Ms. Marie-Anne Birken, General Counsel of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

Mr. Alejandro Sousa, Senior Legal Advisor, Office of the President of the UN General Assembly

Ms. Marieke Wierda, Policy Coordinator - Rule of Law Cluster, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Netherlands

### About IDLO

Established in 1983, the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) is the only intergovernmental organization exclusively devoted to promoting the rule of law.

IDLO works to enable governments and empower people to reform laws and strengthen institutions to promote peace, justice, sustainable development and economic opportunity. Its programs, research and policy advocacy cover the spectrum of rule of law from peace and institution building to social development and economic recovery in countries emerging from conflict and striving towards democracy.

IDLO has its headquarters in Rome, a Branch Office in The Hague, liaison offices for the United Nations in New York and Geneva, and Country Offices in Afghanistan, Honduras, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Somalia, South Sudan and Tajikistan.

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