

Thank You, Madam Chair,

We thank the UN Secretary General for his Report A/76/235 and acknowledge the assistance extended by the UN to Member States in promoting Rule of law at the national and international levels and ensuring respect for human rights particularly in the context of Covid-19 pandemic.

2. We associate ourselves with the statement delivered by the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). I would like to make the following remarks in our national capacity.

3. United Nations is based on the principle of sovereign equality that is all States have equal status regardless of their size. Consequently, application of rule of law at the international level should, at the very best, serve to protect the sovereign equality of states. This will automatically mean, by extension, protecting the sovereignty and integrity of States from aggression, the most vicious of which is terrorism especially cross border terrorism. Consequently, respect for rule of law is fundamental when it comes to inter-relationship between member states of the UN.

4. Protecting the rule of law also entails fully respecting and giving effect to the decisions of international judicial bodies, including UNCLOS. This is

5. India is the world's largest democracy. The independence of judiciary, legislature and executive along with a free and vibrant media and civil society with strong traditions of electoral democracy are the basis for governance and the rule of law in our Country. In context of the world is facing a "public health emergency" due to Covid-19, where domestic judicial systems around the world are struggling to function, India has ensured continuous access of our people to justice by making courts to function online and hearing cases through video conferencing.

6. India has ensured access to justice by making use of digital technology. The entire judicial system was made to function online and hear cases through video conferencing. Ever since March 2020, approximately 8 million cases have been heard by Indian Courts during lockdown through virtual hearing mode and the Supreme Court of India has held more than 60,000 (sixty thousand) virtual hearings.

7. India recognises the role of multilateral treaty processes in advancing the rule of law which is also evident from the fact that India is a party to a greater number of treaties/conventions adopted under the auspices of the United Nations and other bodies. We have taken steps to give effect to those treaties by enacting laws for advancing their purpose. India also continues to partner fellow developing countries in capacity building efforts on aspects such as electoral practices, drafting of legislations and other law enforcement issues.

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