



**Permanent Mission of The State of Eritrea
To the United Nations, New York**

Statement by Ms. Helene Awet Woldeyohannes
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On item 82: The Rule of law at the national and international levels
At the Sixth Committee of the 69th session of
the United Nations General Assembly
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Mr. Chairman,

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement as well as the statement made by South Africa on behalf of the African Group on this agenda item.

Mr. Chairman,

Eritrea attaches great importance to this year's theme "Sharing States' national practices in strengthening the rule of law through access to justice". Although this year's theme focuses on the rule of law at the national level, Eritrea strongly believes that the rule of law from the international dimension needs greater attention since it has a serious impact on the national effort in strengthening the normative frameworks and capable institutions in Eritrea.

Mr. Chairman,

Nationally and internationally, the Government of Eritrea's unequivocal commitment to achieve peaceful and inclusive societies through access to justice for all via effective and capable institutions must naturally be gauged in light of the enormous challenges faced during the nation building process.

Mr. Chairman,

Nationally, the Government of Eritrea has been pursuing key priorities, such as:

1. **Greater participation of the community** in the judicial process. Community Courts enhance people's access to justice with less cost, and thus make the judicial process accessible to the larger community, the poor in particular.
2. **Enhancing access and the delivery of justice.** In this regard, recent legislations, promulgated by the Government in 2012 encompass appropriate

changes in the jurisdiction of courts, the refinement of procedural laws, as well as the introduction of new laws for more effective enforcement. This new arrangement also allows citizens to have access to judicial services within their vicinity resulting in less expenses and energy.

3. **Empowerment of women:** FGM and underage marriage have been criminalized. Women's rights to own property, including land claim, and equal payment for equal work have been entrenched in the laws. 30 per cent of the parliament seat is allocated to women. Also as part of the policy of the Government of Eritrea to empower the youth, a new elected executive body of the National Union of Eritrean Women (NUEW) includes young Eritreans.

4. **Effecting social justice** by ascertaining universal or wide access to food security, health, education, and infrastructural facilities. In addition, efforts have been made to reduce the disparities between rural/urban populations, through the construction of roads, dams, schools, health centers and hospitals. Through these interventions the country has strengthened the framework of a balanced and sustainable development agenda.

5. **Human resource development:** Bridging the gender and diversity gap for the representation of legal professionals has resulted in the opening of several training centers that have introduced effective action, for example a specific policy that mandates one of the three community judges should be a woman.

6. **Resource exploitation and utilization:** The Eritrean mining law, prepared to satisfy the key development policy, stipulates that all mineral resources in Eritrea are public property, and hence the State has a duty to ensure the conservation and sustainable development of these resources for the benefit of the people.

7. **International cooperation:** Eritrea in close partnership with the United Nations is working to strengthen its judicial system based on the needs and priorities, namely effectiveness and local or national ownership. In this regard, it has signed the new Strategic Partnership Cooperation Framework (SPCF 2013-2016).

Mr. Chairman,

Building independent, efficient and competent judicial systems are the backbone of the rule of law in Eritrean national efforts. Similarly, safeguarding the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence of the State of Eritrea from aggression, occupation, unwarranted sanctions, and belligerent stances of hostile powers are also key priorities for the Government of Eritrea. In this regard, rule of law and justice at the international level must be strengthened and consolidated to address global security, human rights, and development challenges. Then and only then will we have national, regional and international peace and security.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.