STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT MISSION OF COSTA RICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON BEHALF OF THE COMMUNITY OF LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN STATES

THE RULE OF LAW AT THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS

Mister Chairman:

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, CELAC.

The Community of Latin American and Caribbean States welcomes the Secretary General annual report on strengthening and coordinating United Nations rule of law activities (A/68/ 181), which presents a useful overview of the achievements and challenges of the UN and its specialized agencies in strengthening the rule of law at the national and international levels. We take note of the report of the Secretary-General issued pursuant

As Members of the United Nations, and as stated in the high level Declaration, we are determined to establish a just and lasting peace all over the world, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. We rededicate ourselves to support all efforts to uphold the sovereign equality of all States, to respect their territorial integrity and political independence, to refrain in our international relations from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations, and to uphold the resolution of disputes by peaceful means and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, the right to self-determination of peoples which remain under colonial domination and foreign occupation, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for the equal rights of all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion, international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character and the fulfillment in good faith of the obligations assumed in accordance with the Charter.

CELAC recognizes that respect for the rule of law at the international level implies compliance with the existing international legal framework, in which the rule of law applies to all States equally and to international organisations, including the UN and its principal organs. In this regard, we reaffirm the obligation of all States to settle their international disputes by peaceful means, inter alia through negotiation, enquiry, good offices, mediation, conciliation,

As we did in the High Level Declaration on this topic, we reaffirm the principle of good governance and commit to an effective, just, non-discriminatory and equitable delivery of public services pertaining to the rule of law, including criminal, civil and administrative justice, commercial dispute settlement and legal aid. We are convinced that the independence of the judicial system, together with its impartiality and integrity, is an essential prerequisite for upholding the rule of law and ensuring that there is no discrimination in the administration of justice. We emphasize the right of equal access to justice for all, including members of vulnerable groups, and the importance of awareness-raising concerning legal rights, and in this regard we commit to taking all necessary steps to provide fair, transparent, effective, non-discriminatory and accountable services that promote access to justice for all, including legal aid.

CELAC emphasizes the importance of continuing our consideration and promotion of the rule of law in all its aspects to further develop the linkages between the rule of law and the three main pillars of the United Nations: peace and security, human rights and development.

We welcome the advances in the promotion of the rule of law at the regional level and reiterate CELAC's commitment to this objective.

Thank you.