

Following the first-ever High-Level Meeting on the Rule of Law at the National and International Levels in September 2012, the UN General Assembly adopted a Declaration “reaffirm[ing] our commitment to the rule of law and its fundamental importance for political dialogue and cooperation among all States and for the further development of the three main pillars upon which the United Nations is built: international peace and security, human rights and development.” (RES/67/1). The Holy See Delegation welcomed this endorsement of the rule of law.

While commitment to the rule of law would appear to be universal, there nonetheless remains persistent disagreement about the definition of “the rule of law.” The Holy See Delegation has endorsed a definition of the rule of law, which is both rationally and morally grounded upon the substantial principles of justice, including the inalienable dignity and value of every human person prior to any law or social consensus; and, as a consequence of the recognition of this dignity, those elements of fundamental justice such as respect for the principle of legality (*Nullum crimen sine lege*), the presumption of

promote public integrity and sustain the rule of law. As Pope Francis affirmed: "When a society, whether local, national or global, is willing to leave a part of itself on the fringes, no political programs or resources spent on law enforcement or surveillance systems can indefinitely guarantee tranquility." (Evangelii Gaudium n.59). This is why the promotion of the rule of law needs to be indispensably supported and verified by prioritizing the allocation of public resources to human integral development.

Mr. Chairman,

At the center of the international framework governing rule of law stands the UN