Madam Chairperson,

Let me first thank the Secretary-General for his excellent annual report on 'strengthening and coordinating United Nations rule of law activities'. The Report very eloquently highlights the United Nations approach to the rule of law at the national and international levels.
The Report illustrates key achievements of the United Nations support to States at the national level over the past one year as well as identifies critical gaps and challenges. We are happy to note that there continues to be progress towards a more comprehensive and joint approach among United Nations entities to support the rule of law in line with national priorities and plans. With regard to the rule of law at the international level, the Report provides insights into emerging mechanisms and practices that promote the effective implementation of international law by Member States.

Madam Chairperson,

The item “Rule of Law at the International and National Levels” has been on the agenda of the United Nations General Assembly since its Sixty-Second Session. The main objective for inclusion of this agenda item was to strengthen the United Nations attention to the Rule of Law at all levels.

We align ourselves with the statement made by Iran on behalf of NAM. India strongly adheres to the rule of law both at the international and national levels. At the national level India considers the advancement of the rule of law as an essential tool for the protection of democracy, promotion of sustainable economic growth, sustainable development, poverty and hunger eradication and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. At the international level we see the promotion of the rule of law as an essential tool for promoting harmony, and ensuring development, peaceful co-existence and cooperation among States and strengthening international peace and security.

Madam Chairperson,

Pursuant to GA Resolution 64/116, the focus of our debate in this session is on the sub-topic “Laws and practices of Member States in implementing international law”.

In this context I would like to mention that the Indian Constitution is firmly rooted in rule of law principles, ensuring separation of powers between the executive, legislative and judicial branch of the Government and making each one accountable for their actions; ensuring adherence to the provisions of the Constitution by the authorities; making Central Government responsible for the implementation of the international treaties and agreements to which India is a party; guaranteeing to the people equality before law without any discrimination whatsoever; and ensuring the promotion and protection of individual rights and fundamental freedoms, etc.
Another important aspect of the promotion of the rule of law at the national level is the implementation by States of their obligations undertaken pursuant to international treaties and agreements. India fulfills this obligation very rigorously in respect of the agreements or treaties to which it is a party.

Madam Chairperson,

Compliance with the rule of law standards at the national level not only assures respect for the country and its people, it also helps underprivileged and other vulnerable sections of the society in getting justice, dignity and empowerment. It also strengthens linkage between municipal law and international law, while promoting development and enhancing democratic values and institutions.

Our judicial system oversees that the rule of law is enforced rigorously at the national level. Presently, the judicial reforms being undertaken in my country by the UPA Government, led by the Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh ji, and UPA Chairperson Madam Sonia Gandhi ji, would further supplement the rule of law efforts at the national level as these reforms are aimed at strengthening a transparent, accountable, responsive, effective and efficient judiciary.

At the executive level the Government has adopted many milestone social development programmes, aimed at poverty elevation and ensuring inclusive growth so that the benefits of development can reach every section of the society. The legislature is also not lagging behind in its efforts to adopt appropriate legislative measures for the protection and upliftment of the disadvantaged and vulnerable sections of the society.

India is thus firmly committed to implement the rule of law at the national level so that the ideals of democracy, human rights, dignity and peaceful coexistence, which are the cornerstones of a civilized society, can be achieved and further promoted.

Madam Chairperson,

The rule of law must be strengthened at all levels - national, institutional, and international. To ensure transparency, fairness and adherence to the rule of law in the UN system, it is necessary that the mandate of one organ of the UN should not be infringed upon or duplicated by the other organ of the UN. It is also necessary to support and further encourage those institutional policies and processes that ensure a just and effective international order based on the rule of law.
In this regard all efforts should be made to strengthen the capacity of States, especially of developing States, as the rule of law assistance has sometimes been piecemeal and, in some instances, donor-driven and not in line with national priorities of the recipient countries. There is an urgent need to move towards approaches that are nationally-driven and sustainable, and approaches that can garner the requisite political and popular support.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.