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**AALCO'S 63<sup>RD</sup> CONSTITUTION DAY CELEBRATIONS FRIDAY,  
15 NOVEMBER 2019**

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*Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

1. It is with utmost pleasure that we have assembled here today to celebrate the 63<sup>rd</sup> Constitution Day of AALCO; and I must congratulate everyone present here on this august occasion.
  
2. I take this opportunity to specially congratulate the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania for successfully hosting the recently concluded 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Session of AALCO in Dar es Salaam from 21-25 October 2019.
  
3. It is a matter of pride for my country India to be one of the founding members of this Organization and hosting the Headquarters. It is indeed an honour for me to deliver this address on behalf of the host government. As a founding Member, we take pride in the organization's untiring work in strengthening international law through various activities.
  
4. I appreciate the efforts of the Secretary-General and that of all the three Deputy Secretaries-General and Staff of the Organization for the rich contribution in the

endeavour for facilitating progressive development and the codification of international law.

*Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

5. Since the historic Bandung Conference and its inception, AALCO's approach has always been pragmatic. Till date, AALCO remains a platform to visit the aspirations and expectations of the Asian and African continents, to voice their concerns and to chalk appropriate solutions, thereby facilitating progressive development of international law. AALCO's close cooperation with the United Nations has enabled the Member States to participate in the interactive dialogue and thereby to contribute to the progressive development of international law issues of contemporary relevance. In the same spirit, AALCO follows the work of the International Law Commission and deliberates on topics under consideration of the Commission at its Annual Sessions. AALCO has registered its contribution in the development of the core fields of international law such as the Law of the Sea, the law of treaties, international criminal law and cooperation including extradition; international humanitarian law; and the international trade and investment law.

6. In order to achieve the objective of international peace and security and international co-operation, codified rules of law ought to correspond to the needs of contemporary conditions existing in the international community and, consequently, should reflect the views and aspirations of all States. Pursuant to this vision, AALCO has been formulating several themes for the general statement in recent years, emphasizing the need for multilateralism and the rule of law in global governance. AALCO Member states have a common interest in preserving and advancing rules based and inclusive international order, including the reforms that reflect the new realities of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. India has been working to make the multilateral system fit for the challenges it faces, as

well as more transparent to deliver on citizens expectation, not least by fully supporting reforms to the multilateral mechanism.

7. AALCO member states also deliberated upon topics of contemporary pertinence namely international law in cyberspace, marine biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction and investment and trade reforms.

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8. India as a founding member of this organization is proud to host its Headquarters in New Delhi. It may be recalled that in its First Session in New Delhi in 1957 of Asian Legal Consultative Committee (ALCC as then referred to), the then Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, in the course of his inaugural address voiced his sentiments for the future functioning of the Committee as an effective forum for regional cooperation and suggested that its membership should embrace participation of not only Asian but African Members as well. The suggestion of the Prime Minister was followed up by changes being effected in the Committee's status and its Constitution; soon thereafter Egypt joined the ranks of the seven sponsoring original Asian member States and significantly enough the Committee held its Second Session in Cairo. However, AALCO still has a limited membership from the African continent. This indicates that to fulfill the vision of our founding fathers, more concerted efforts are required to bring more African members to our Organization.

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9. In order to enable the Organization to pursue its mandate, the membership must commit itself to contribute their best expertise in the field of international law for deliberations on areas of regional and global importance. Needless to say, the financial

contribution and consistent cooperation by Member States is the key for effective functioning of the Organization.

I wish you all a wonderful evening!

Thank you.