

**Address Delivered by Dr. V. D. Sharma, Joint Secretary and Legal Adviser,
Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India on the Occasion of the
61st Constitution Day Celebration of AALCO Held on 10 November 2017**

Secretary-General Dr. Kennedy Gastorn;

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen;

It gives me immense pleasure that we have assembled to celebrate the Constitution Day of our Organization, the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO). 2017 is the sixty-first year of the establishment of the Organization. I appreciate the efforts of the Secretary-General and that of all three Deputy Secretary-General, Officers and Staff of the Organization in this endeavour.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

2. It is a matter of pride for my country India to be one of the founding members of this Organization and hosting the Headquarters. Concerning its functioning, as we all know, the Organization takes stock of international law issues and its own administrative and financial matters at the annual sessions. This year's session (56th annual session) was held in Nairobi, Kenya in the month of May, by virtue of which currently Kenya holds the Presidency of the Organization. I take this opportunity to congratulate the Government of Kenya for having concluded a successful session.

3. Since the historic Bandung Conference and its inception, AALCO has discharged the mandate of facilitating democratization of the development and the codification of international law. The Organization's approach has been always practical than ambitious. This Organization remains a platform to meet the aspirations and expectations of the Asian and African continents, in developing approaches to international law and thereby facilitating its progressive development. AALCO has registered its contribution in the development of the core fields of international law

including the Law of the Sea, the law of treaties, international criminal law and cooperation including extradition; international humanitarian law; and the international trade and investments laws.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

4. If international society is to evolve and grow along rational and peaceful lines, it could be possible only by acting in accordance with legal principles and rules. The principal aim of international regulations remains to ensure peace and security for all, with the ultimate objective of development and welfare of all. This objective could be achieved by respecting the basic principles of international law embodied in the UN Charter and other principles of international law. The regional organizations, like the AALCO certainly got an important role to play, in fact, bear the responsibility in achieving this objective through the dissemination of international law principles among its member States and beyond.

5. In the words of Dr. B. Sen, the first Secretary-General of AALCO, “to achieve the objective of international peace and security and international co-operation, codified rules of law should correspond to the needs of contemporary conditions existing in the international community and, consequently, should reflect the views and aspirations of all States, whatever may be the form of civilization or legal system to which they may belong”.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

6. I am happy to note that AALCO’s close cooperation with the United Nations has provided an additional platform for AALCO member States to participate in the interactive dialogue and thereby to contribute to the progressive development of international law. Such interactive dialogues on international law issues are now frequently organized by the AALCO representation at the United Nations. In the same spirit, AALCO follows the work of the International Law Commission (ILC) and

deliberates on topics under consideration of the Commission at its Annual sessions.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

7. I believe that in order to transform into reality, the ideas of the development of international law for the peace, security and overall welfare of the whole mankind, the organizations like ours, on their part, need to make assessment of their mandated role and efforts taken. The membership of our Organization 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 to the survival and functioning of the Organization.

I congratulate you all at this important occasion.

Thank you.