Key terms: international organizations, rule of law, development, judiciary, United Nations, World Bank, European Union.

International organizations including the United Nations, the World Bank and the European Union stress the importance of the rule of law as a prerequisite for economic, political and social development. On this basis, these organizations spend a good deal of money and dispose of a lot of influence. The paper also notes that the rule of law is historically a Western concept and other countries, notably China, have not accepted this linkage.

The rule of law is a multifaceted concept. But we shall follow these international organizations in focusing on the position of the judiciary (understood as a wide term to include not only courts) because this is the pressure point, at which law is or is not enforced.

Against this background, this paper will be divided into the following parts:
1) the general definitions of rule of law and development (in brief) and a scrutiny of the particular definitions utilized by these international organizations
2) the activities undertaken, including funding, to promote the rule of law in order to encourage development
3) findings regarding the impact of these activities on both rule of law and development.