

United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC)
Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)
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**Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am pleased to see that so many of you have accepted the invitation to attend this meeting on “Strengthening Practical Co-operation between Regional and International Organizations” in the fight against terrorism. Each word in the well-chosen title of the Conference is crucial:

- 1. we talk about doing better a job which started not so long ago, whose results only now are starting to emerge: hence the notion of strengthening the work;**
- 2. we talk about getting into result-based activities, so as to see even better and more concrete results: hence the notion of practical work;**
- 3. we talk about working together, as no institution, no country on its own could accomplish what is a global undertaking: hence the notion of cooperation;**
- 4. we talk about addressing issues which are rooted in the reality of many countries: hence the notion of capitalizing on regional expertise, in a international setting.**

In the audience I do not only recognize *the usual suspects* – colleagues in institutions, centers and committees dealing with terrorism, money laundering, trafficking, drugs and crime. I am particularly pleased to see here organizations also active in the field of

development. This is great; this presence is evidence of the growing realization that violence (whether motivated by the greed of criminals or the infatuation of terrorists), stands in the way of economic growth and sustainable development. Of course, the converse is also true: in the ideal world of the United Nations – a world with better economic performance everywhere, more equitable sharing of the planet’s resources, and greater availability of health and education for all – well in this sort of world, greed and infatuation will not motivate as many *soldiers of violence* as there today.

Development, Terrorism and Related Forms of Crime

In order to represent concretely my Office’s contribution to counter-terrorism, let me first mention a recent survey, based on case studies from all continents (but Australia) that has identified factors which make nations “hospitable” to transnational crime and terrorism. Among the *environmental factors* conducive to organized violence are the following:

- 1. official corruption**
- 2. weak legislation**
- 3. poor law enforcement**
- 4. non-transparent financial institutions**
- 5. bad economic conditions**
- 6. inadequate rule of law**
- 7. porous borders**
- 8. weak political establishment**

9. geographic location (e.g. along arms- or narcotics-trafficking route)
10. geopolitical issues (e.g. territorial disputes).

I am sure you all may have such a list in mind, covering more or less the same elements. My point is not about producing the *right list of pro-violence factors*. Rather, my point is that the same factors that make countries prone to both terrorism and transnational crime are also the factors that need to be overcome to allow a country to enter sustainable development. Most of those factors are domestic in nature while a few others are shared with neighbouring countries.

This sort of contextual analysis provides a good starting point to reflect on what needs to be done about international cooperation in criminal matters in general, and terrorism in particular. But it can also serve as a checklist of where we have to strengthen common defences. Today, many of the issues emerging from this analysis are already addressed by the international community; many organizations here present, are indeed contributing. Yet, there is more to be done. Let me therefore outline what we, at the United Nations *Office on Drugs and Crime* have been, and will be doing:

1. *Corruption*, especially in high places, is a major problem. Here the news is good. We have assisted Member States in the successful negotiation of the first ever comprehensive Convention against Corruption which was opened last December for signature. Over one hundred states have already signed it, and

the first ratification has already taken place. Building on this historic success (I do not believe it is an exaggeration to call it this way), we are now launching a major program for immediate implementation of some of the elements of the convention – especially in the area of prevention, training and institution building. We have already identified a number of countries (and regions) where the problem is most seriously felt and where the impact – including on curtailing the environmental precursors to violent crime – is more likely to be felt.

- 1. *weak legislation.* The *Office* sends out technical assistance teams to strengthen Members States' institutional (and legislative) resilience in the field of drugs, crime, trafficking in human beings, corruption and terrorism. In the last sixteen month alone, the UNODC's Global Programme against Terrorism has provided legislative assistance to 34 states on a bi-lateral basis, while meeting with representatives of another three dozens States in multilateral workshops and regional meetings. We have reviewed with them what needs to be done to meet the obligations of Security Council resolution 1373 and the international conventions and protocols related to the prevention and suppression of international terrorism.**

- 3. *poor law enforcement:* capacity-building in the criminal justice systems must be promoted more vigorously. This being one of the *Office's* main mandates, we have developed projects in a number of countries, from Lebanon to Afghanistan, from Nigeria to**

Brazil. We are now considering a major mentorship program for criminal justice officials whereby seasoned practitioners, will serve for limited periods of time in the Ministries of Justice of requesting countries. The goal is to transfer know-how in areas like mutual legal assistance, while preserving the principle that law enforcement is a national task, mentors being there only to help.

4: *Murky financial institutions.* They are a problem, both a cause and a consequence of poor accountability and widespread money laundering practices. Law enforcement succeeds only if supported by an environment of financial probity. We assist countries in setting up Financial Intelligence Units and placing other mentors there, on assignments similar to the ones mentioned earlier.

5: *Poverty.* Of course, UNODC has no mandate in this area, and we are not looking for one. We cannot be blind. Poverty is not a justification for violence; yet, it is an ingredient. Some say, it is even a cause, by making the social environment more prone to illegality. When the majority of people in regions like Central Asia, West Asia, Central America, the Caucuses, the Caribbean, East and Southern Africa, or in countries like Afghanistan and Haiti live on less than one hundred dollars a month, we should accept that the temptation to improve one's living conditions at the expenses of the rest of society is enormous. But it is not only a question of mass poverty, and I wish to give you a quick example.

The other day, in a meeting in Zambia about the devastating effect of HIV/AIDS, local ministers briefed us about the enormous impact the pandemic has on families, causing an unprecedented number of orphans -- tens of millions of them, mostly living in mass poverty, extremely vulnerable to drugs, crime and terrorism. Social deprivation is as bad as economic poverty.

- 6: *Inadequate rule of law in society.* A recent report by the *Commission on Unleashing Entrepreneurship*, namely on ways and means to making business work for the poor, stressed that both laws and their respect do matter. Empirical evidence indeed shows that the strength of the rule of law is strongly correlated to the inflow of foreign investment and to the development of local entrepreneurship. No surprise that in the recent reorganization of my *Office*, we took into account that the rule of law with a system of fair and effective administration of justice is an essential factor not only for crime prevention, but also for development.**
- 7: *Porous borders.* The initiative undertaken in Paris last May, by the Foreign Ministers of the G8 -- *the Paris Pact* -- on the strengthening of border controls along the drug trafficking routes, has become an important component of UNODC's work program. Similarly, our pilot project on containers and port security and other initiatives against drug trafficking address the issue of border control, a subject which will also be the theme of one of the panels of this follow-up meeting -- Working Group 3.**

The last three issues on the list – *lack of political will, geographic location and regional geopolitical issues* - are factors beyond our competence and control. Many of us are familiar with the World Bank studies on the context and the correlates of almost one hundred major conflicts, instances of civil strife and wide-spread violence (including recent cases of large scale terrorism) that took place worldwide in the past half a century. Evidence shows that most of these conflicts have indeed taken place there where resources are more abundant; where geopolitical sensitivities are more strongly felt; where state institutions are weaker (if not collapsed); and where society has not yet tapped its potential for political and economic democracy.

The point I wish to make is that the UN *Office on Drugs and Crime* is actively tackling most of the factors that make certain regions, whether within or around nations, *more environmentally prone* to large scale crime and terrorism. Although the *Office's* work is limited by the resources at our disposal, we believe the impact is there: as cost-effective as possible, without needlessly duplicating efforts undertaken better by others. To integrate efforts and create synergies is what we are here for today.

The Need for More Effective Multilateral Action

Terrorism is not thriving in a vacuum. It is a social evil related to others. By attacking these factors, we contribute to make countries less

hospitable to situations that radicalize (young) people and drive them into the arms of those who preach and practice violence.

We need a multi-pronged approach to fight terrorism. Trafficking – whether in drugs, in firearms, in human beings or in their organs – corruption and money-laundering, precede and accompany terrorist crimes. Terrorists operate in the same black markets where organized crime is active. Sometimes organized criminal groups and terrorist groups work together on an ad hoc basis; more often terrorist groups develop criminal in-house capabilities, paralleling and matching those of organized crime groups, without much cooperation or even in competition with the purely criminal mafias. Either way, we can weaken terrorist groups by going forcefully after their profit-oriented criminal activities.

In the past, efforts to combat terrorism have not taken into account that violence by terrorists and by common criminals are related to one other. The funding is often the same; the logistic also. And so are the recruitment campaigns. Yet, there have been instances where law enforcement officers who searched for drugs would disregard terrorist pamphlets in the premises they searched; similarly, those searching for terrorists, whether in the urban setting of Baghdad or in the rural areas of Afghanistan, have been less interested in traces of drugs, in which suspected terrorists were involved.

We cannot neglect one task in favour of the other. They are connected, not necessarily in one and the same country but certainly

across borders. We need multilateral surveys and monitoring to keep under control the relation between ideology-driven terrorism and profit-driven crime. With the help of an integrated effort that compares crimes in different countries and tackles their linkages to terrorist organizations, we are more likely to be able to deprive terrorists of their criminal sources of income.

In conclusion:

- **we need to give more attention to the contextual factors that make both transnational crime and terrorism possible and at the same time make economic growth and sustainable development often impossible.**
- **We also need to consider how to make multilateral action more effective by looking at terrorism and related forms of crime in an integrated way.**

I give you these two points to consider as we deliberate today and tomorrow on how best to “Strengthening Practical Co-operation between Regional and International Organizations”.

Thank you for your attention!



Factors Making a Nation “Hospitable” to Transnational Crime and Terrorism

1. **official corruption**
2. **incomplete or weak legislation**
3. **poor enforcement of existing laws**
4. **non-transparent financial institutions**
5. **unfavourable economic conditions**
6. **lack of respect for the rule of law in society**
7. **poorly guarded national borders**
8. **lack of political will to establish the rule of law**
9. **geographic location (e.g. along arms- or narcotics-trafficking route)**
10. **regional geopolitical issues (e.g. long-standing territorial disputes)**