

**Remarks on behalf of the UNOV/UNODC Director-  
General/Executive Director  
G-77 handover ceremony  
11 February 2016**

Excellencies,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Colleagues,

Thank you for inviting me to deliver a statement at the 2015 handover ceremony of the Chairmanship of the G-77 Vienna Chapter on behalf of the Director-General of UNOV/Executive Director of UNODC, Mr. Yury Fedotov.

Mr. Fedotov sends his warmest regards and regrets that he is unable to attend in person. On his behalf allow me to thank the distinguished outgoing president of the G-77 Vienna Chapter, Ambassador Andreyeva, for his hard work, commitment and dedication.

I also welcome the incoming president Ambassador Simon Madjumo Maruta. Both Mr. Fedotov and I look forward to working with you in the future.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The G-77 has a distinguished position in world affairs and plays a significant role in helping UNODC meet the multifaceted and interrelated challenges of drugs, crime, corruption and terrorism.

You are an invaluable actor within the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. The insights and experience that the G-77 provides to these bodies informs UNODC's work and is essential in helping us to meet our broad mandate. In this connection, let me assure you that we are taking action on your concern to ensure that the UNODC workforce, both at Headquarters and in the field, benefits from a wider geographic distribution and meets the UN gender balance target.

Your role is also crucial elsewhere. We face a number of often interconnected threats. This includes concerns over the nexus between criminal networks and terrorist organizations.

It appears that Boko Haram in Africa, and ISIL/Daesh in the Middle East are involved in people trafficking, as well as the smuggling of other illicit goods.

Deadly attacks around the world are also raising concern about terrorism and violent extremism, as well as the growing fear about the impact of foreign-terrorist fighters.

The migrant crisis is being assisted by cruel migrant smuggling, and exploited for the purposes of human trafficking. UNODC is combating the smugglers in the Mediterranean through a regional strategy supported by the European Union that seeks to punish the migrant smugglers, while supporting the victims. We also participate in measures to address root causes in several countries and regions.

We are only a few short months away from the UNGASS on Drugs 2016 to be held in New York. This process offers a welcome opportunity for member states to debate drug policy, share experiences and promote common solutions with the inputs of civil society, scientific community and other UN agencies.

UNODC, as the only organization within the UN System that works on both the supply and demand sides, is well placed to support this process. I am heartened that the G-77 works hard to promote and encourage the necessary debate and discussion among member states.

This year also sees the start of the long journey to fully implement the 2030 Sustainable Development agenda, which was agreed in September of last year.

All SDGs are in one way or another important to UNODC, but I would mention, in particular, Goal 3 on good health and wellbeing. One of Goal 3's targets is related to preventing and treating substance abuse, including narcotic drug use. Other targets under this goal include bringing an end to HIV and combating hepatitis on the basis of people-centered, health-oriented and evidence-based approaches.

Goal 16 calls for peace and justice and strong institutions, as well as reductions in corruption and violence, and an end to the exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children, among other targets.

These two goals, as well as gender equality and equality in general are fundamental to the achievement of other goals that require peaceful societies as the platform for achieving targets related to security, sustainable development and human rights. UNODC is, therefore, involved in the essential work of helping to remove barriers that may hinder the success of the overall 2030 agenda.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

This year is pivotal to the UNODC and we look forward to a close and constructive partnership with G-77 countries to help us best achieve our mandates. I once again congratulate Ambassador Maruta and offer him UNODC's full support in the months ahead.

**Thank you.**