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Special Address to the G-77 on the Post-Santa Cruz Follow-up

Distinguished guests, Ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you for inviting me to address you today, following the Santa Cruz Commemorative Summit of the 50th Anniversary of the Group of 77.

The title of the summit was a "New World Order for Living well" and I am glad that I have an opportunity to speak on this issue from the perspective of UNODC's own experience and mandate.

Before doing so, however, I should like to pay tribute to the G-77 itself.

Formed in 1964, by the "Joint Declaration of the Seventy-Seven Countries" issued at UNCTAD, the G-77 plays an essential role in furthering the joint interests of this group of mostly developing nations.

Through the G-77, the collective voices of these countries can be heard on such pivotal issues as trade, aid, transport, finance and technology.

Today, the G-77 is a prominent actor across the international community. From UNIDO to UNESCO and from the IMF to the World Bank. Every one of these organizations has gained from the insights and views of the G-77.

I also commend the G-77 for your many efforts here in Vienna at the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice on the issues of drugs and crime.

Your support at the CND and CCPCJ is helping to shape the work of UNODC today, as well as to adapt ourselves to meet the challenges of drugs and crimes of tomorrow.

In his statement at the Santa Cruz Summit, the Secretary-General in Santa Cruz said, "As we look to formulate a universal post-2015 development agenda, the vigor and leadership of the G77 and China is crucially important."

Allow me to echo his words, but also to stress the need to recognize the impact that drugs, crime, corruption and terrorism have on our attempts to achieve the MDGs and to define the future Sustainable Development Goals.

UNODC's own experience reinforces this need. Drug trafficking, and other organized crime activities have a destructive impact on health, security and development.

Corruption is one of the most profoundly damaging crimes. Each year, 20 to 40 billion US dollars are stolen through corruption from developing nations. And this is a conservative estimation of the amount.

The UNCAC Review mechanism is helping to fight corruption. It enables countries to review peers in a partnership process that is adding to the global discussion on the impact of corruption. I would like to thank the G-77 for their support of this unique tool.

Rampant corruption eats away at good governance and key institutions weakening the ability of countries to tackle drugs and crime.

In turn, essential institutions, such as criminal justice systems, can be eroded by corruption. As a result, they fail to effectively protect people from crime and violence.

The result is a society where individuals and communities are denied access to justice and basic social services, where human rights are ignored and where development, peace and security are threatened.

For this reason, there is a growing recognition, both within the UN and outside, that action to confront illicit drugs and organized crime needs to be included in our work enabling economic and social development.

UNODC's own approach seeks to integrate its efforts across country and regional programmes, while also promoting strong partnerships that can help prevent and combat crime.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our world is complex, challenging and rapidly evolving.

And there are no simple solutions to eradicate the harmful influence of illicit drugs, corruption and crime on development.

In the past, these challenges were often countered in splendid isolation. There was little understanding of the impact of these issues on poverty, inequality and natural resources.

Today, we see further down the road. And, we are willing to act upon what we see.

As part of this evolution, UNODC is delivering integrated and comprehensive responses that promote the rule of law and criminal justice systems. The very institutions needed to safeguard the sustainable development goals we wish to introduce.

I hope and trust that the G-77 will continue to support UNODC's efforts in these areas, and that, by doing so, we will create a world where everyone can "live well" free of the impact of illicit drugs and organized crime.

Thank you.