



STATEMENT OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA ON THE OCCASION OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE WORKING GROUP ON THE SMUGGLING OF MIGRANTS, 30 MAY - 1 JUNE 2012, DELIVERED BY MS. JULIA VILLATORO, PERMANENT MISSION OF EL SALVADOR ON BEHALF OF H.E. ANTONIO GARCIA, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF PERU

Vienna, 30 May 2012

Mr. Chairman,

1. At the outset, allow me to congratulate you on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on your election as Chairman of the first meeting of the Working Group on the Smuggling of Migrants. I would like to assure you of our full support and collaboration. I would also like to thank the Secretariat for the preparations of the meeting including for the background documents that I will touch in a moment.

2. Different aspects of "Smuggling of migrants" have been previously discussed in other forums, such as during the 21st Commission of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. The Group would like to remind that the purpose of the establishment of this Working Group is to advise and assist the Conference of Parties to UNTOC in the implementation of its mandate regarding the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol.

3. In this regard, the Group notes that problems and good practices related to several aspects of this problem have already been identified earlier, as indicated in the documents prepared by the Secretariat. Nevertheless, to date, many members of our Group continue to be victims of this scourge and/or in the fight against it. The Group believes that there is still a lot of work to be done.

4. The Group would like to highlight, inter alia, the following aspects of great importance to our members:

a) The development or strengthening of laws to maximize opportunities for international cooperation, including in extradition and mutual legal assistance, as well as the establishment and maintenance of direct channels of communication between border control agencies, as appropriate.

b) The obligation of all States parties to take all appropriate measures to protect the rights of victims of smuggling, and prevent them from being subjected to torture or other cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment. In this regard, the Group looks forward to the implementation of the Resolution entitled: "Promoting efforts to eliminate violence against migrants, migrant workers and their families", adopted by the 21st session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in April 2012.

c) The importance of provision of technical assistance to States that are frequently countries of origin or transit for persons who have been the object of smuggling.

Mr. Chairman,

5. The Group would like to urge all States, international organizations and relevant stakeholders to take into account in their policies and initiatives on migration issues the global character of the migratory phenomenon and to give due consideration to international, regional and bilateral cooperation in this field, with a view to addressing, in a comprehensive manner, its causes and consequences and granting priority to the protection of the human rights of migrants.

6. In this context, the Group looks forward to a productive discussion and exchange of best practices in order

to obtain concrete actions to address in a proper way the smuggling of migrants at various levels.

Many thanks!