



STATEMENT BY THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA DURING THE ELEVENTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE, VIENNA 16-25 APRIL 2002, DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR VICTOR G. GARCIA III, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PHILIPPINES

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me first to express on behalf of the Group of 77 and China our congratulations to you and the other members of the Bureau on your election, and to assure you of our full support toward the successful conclusion of our work. I also would like to take this opportunity to commend the Secretariat for its preparations for this session, and to thank the Acting Executive Director for his informative report. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I wish to congratulate Mr. Antonio Maria Costa on his appointment as Director-General of UNOV and Executive Director of ODCCP, and to convey to him our support of his assignment.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group has taken note of the significant developments in relation to crime prevention and criminal justice since the adoption in April 2000 of the Vienna Declaration on Crime and Criminal Justice: Meeting the Challenges of the Twenty-First Century by the 10th UN Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders. Some of these achievements were the adoption of the Convention on Transnational Organized Crime and 3 Protocols thereto, and the beginning of negotiation on the draft Convention against Corruption. These positive steps were made due to the commitment of the international community. However, in facing the ever-increasing and continuous expansion of the modus operandi of criminals in line with the advancement of technology, further efforts should be pursued in order to address criminal cases, particularly those of a transnational nature.

We have plans of action that can serve as guides to Member States in formulating legislation, policies and programmes in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice, but those plans can only be implemented effectively if supported by capable human resources and appropriate institutions. In this regard, programmes and activities in international cooperation, technical assistance, mutual legal assistance, transfer of know-how and technology as well as training, should continually be enhanced and fully supported. The Group wishes to see more elements in the plans of action for the above-mentioned activities to be embodied soon in the ongoing work of the CICP.

Mr. Chairman,

Organized criminal and terrorist groups threaten human security on a large scale throughout the world, targeting civilized society and the very foundations of democracy and law, thereby jeopardizing efforts to promote human prosperity. These activities also corrupt public officials, and the international community should therefore urgently address this issue with a view to finding lasting solutions.

On the issue of international cooperation in combating transnational crime, the Group wishes to call upon Member States to provide the necessary resources to the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Fund, to enable the provision of technical assistance to developing countries in ratifying and implementing the Convention and the protocols thereto. The Group wishes to encourage all regional and sub-regional activities aimed at addressing the problems covered by these international legal instruments, and commends those who have completed or initiated their ratification.

On the issue of terrorism, the Group supports efforts to strengthen international cooperation in combating terrorism. It wishes to stress the importance of finding a long-term and comprehensive strategy to prevent and eradicate terrorism. The Group underscores the central role of the UN in the fight against terrorism and

supports the ongoing negotiation in New York on the draft UN Comprehensive Convention on Terrorism, in conformity with the UN Charter and relevant UN resolutions, in order to achieve universal acceptance. In this connection, it is also pertinent to strengthen the work of CICP, in particular the Terrorism Prevention Branch, by formulating clear objectives and providing new and additional resources that will enable it to fulfill its mandate in terms of technical assistance and international cooperation, including the facilitation of ratification and implementation of the existing United Nations Conventions against terrorism.

Mr. Chairman,

With regard to the issue of corruption, the Group would like to commend the work of the Secretariat in convening the first meeting of the Ad-Hoc Committee on the Elaboration of a Convention against Corruption, which was held in Vienna from 21st January to 1st February 2002. We welcome the proposal made by the delegation of Peru to organize a seminar to deal with the problems of repatriation of assets of illicit origin. The seminar will be held in Vienna on 21st June, during the second session of the Ad Hoc Committee, and will contribute to the work of the delegations in this issue.

We are also encouraged by the constructive contributions made by member countries to improve the draft text of the Convention. The Group remains fully committed to the elaboration of an international legal instrument against corruption, and reiterates its recommendation that this instrument include effective and pragmatic measures to enable the repatriation of assets, including funds of illicit origin to the countries of origin. The Group would also like to highlight the importance of the role played by technical cooperation in assisting developing countries to combat corruption, such as the work of the Global Programme Against Corruption.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group commends the valuable work of the Centre for International Crime Prevention, which plays an important role in providing Member States with technical cooperation, advisory services and other forms of assistance in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice, including the vital areas of prevention and control of transnational organized crime and terrorism. In the interest of efficiency, the Group emphasizes the need for better coordination between the CICP and UNDCP in areas where the mandates of the two are overlapping. This is to ensure coherence of action throughout the United Nations system in responding to the needs of the international community in the face of transnational criminality, and in assisting Member States achieve the goals of preventing crime within and among States and improving the response to crime. However, in strengthening its overall structure, necessary care should be taken to avoid jeopardizing programmes that are essential to assisting developing countries. The Group wishes to call for more transparency in the management of programmes and budget of the organization and requests the Secretariat to provide a detailed report.

The Group, while recognizing that transnational organized crime, corruption and illicit trafficking are the priority areas for the activities of the CICP, deems it imperative to continue addressing criminal justice reform. In this context, we welcome the thematic debate on the reform of criminal justice system, and hope that all its conclusions would be implemented.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group welcomes the convening of the Eleventh Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in the year 2005 and fully endorses Thailand as a venue of the Congress. We believe the Congress to be an auspicious opportunity for the international community to establish an interconnection of constructive cooperation in relation to, among others, the implementation of the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and Convention against Corruption, which are expected to be adopted and to enter into force in the foreseeable future. Political commitment and international partnership could be highlighted in the discussion to combat "crimes without frontiers." It is the Group's fervent hope that the Eleventh Congress can translate the international obligations to the Conventions into a strategic alliance that will effectively address the peripheral aspects, as well as root causes, of transnational organized crime and corruption.

Mr. Chairman,

On the subject of the growing problem of high-technology and computer-related crime, contained in document (E/CN.15/2001/4), the Group welcomes recent efforts to address this problem, including a study on effective measures that could be taken at the national and international levels to prevent and control computer-related crime. We appreciate the contents of the report and the efforts of the Commission in the preparation of a plan of action against high-technology and computer-related crime. We also take note of the report of the Secretary-General on effective measures to prevent and control computer-related crime (E/CN.15/2002/8). Furthermore, the Group calls upon advanced-technology countries to provide effective and appropriate technical cooperation, assistance projects, and financial support in the form of, among others, transfer of know-how and computer-based technology to developing countries, in order to make them more resilient in protecting themselves from high-technology and computer related crime, as well as to increase their readiness in combating such crime.

Finally, the Group of 77 and China will continue to provide its active support to achieve the goals of the Commission and will work untiringly with all members and the Secretariat to that end.

Thank you.