



STATEMENT OF THE G77 AND CHINA DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR ALI ASGHAR SOLTANIEH, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE IR OF IRAN, DURING THE 54TH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS, 21-25 MARCH 2011

Vienna, 21 March 2011

Madam Chairperson,

1. At the outset, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, allow me to express our deepest condolences to the people and government of Japan for the loss of many lives and properties due to the devastating earthquake and tsunami. The Group would also wish to express our sympathy and profound sentiments of sadness to the people and government of Japan for the tragic loss of lives and properties caused by the recent disaster.
2. I have the honor to address you on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. The Group is pleased to see you chairing the 54th session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and assures you of its full support in the tasks ahead. The Group would also like to congratulate the Members of the Bureau and takes this opportunity to express its appreciation to the Secretariat for its hard work in preparing the supporting documents for this session.
3. The Group remains committed to the three international drug control conventions and to the principles reflected in the Political Declaration and Plan of Action adopted in 2009, which set clear specific and comprehensive directives to tackle the challenges for the years ahead. Of these principles, the Group reiterates the centrality of the common and shared responsibility and an integrated and balanced approach in addressing the world drug problem.
4. In this regard, the Group emphasizes that any other approach to address the world drug problem, focused only on the supply side, is unlikely to succeed without matching efforts for demand reduction in destination countries.
5. On the agenda item on drug demand reduction, the G-77 and China is concerned about the drug liberalization policies carried out by some Member States in a way contrary to the three Conventions. The Group calls on all States to adhere strictly to the provisions of the three Conventions.
6. In facing the issue holistically, attention must also be focused on rehabilitation programs to assist drug dependants to reintegrate into society. Effective programs reduce the demand for drugs and contribute towards helping rehabilitated dependants to become responsible and productive members of society.
7. The Group takes note of the joint UNODC/ WHO Programme on Drug Dependence Treatment and Care and encourages UNODC, within its mandate, to continue to strengthen inter-agency cooperation in this respect.
8. The Group of 77 and China recognizes the need to ensure the adequate availability of internationally controlled drugs for medical and scientific purposes, as stipulated in the Drug Conventions, and in this regard expresses its appreciation to the INCB for their in-depth study and recommendations in the recently released report specifically tackling this issue. The Group also would like to emphasize that a balance between ensuring such availability and preventing the drug abuse and diversion be achieved accordingly, and solutions to these inadequacies should be founded on solid evidence and sound analysis, without unduly or unnecessarily slackening the national drug control measures.

9. The Group of 77 emphasizes the need to enhance awareness, technical assistance and capacity-building for medical personnel and law enforcement agencies, in the areas of treatment, care, rehabilitation of drug dependants, and to ensure adequate supply of drugs for uses in those areas.

10. The diversion of precursors for the manufacture of drugs continues to be a challenge in addressing the world drug problem. The increasing trend towards the abuse of synthetic drugs in many parts of the globe further aggravates the problem. Therefore, there is an urgent need to strengthen controls over precursors and other controlled substances.

11. However, while the Group urges that measures be taken to strengthen cooperation with the chemical industry and relevant institutions to prevent diversion of precursors for illicit manufacture of drugs, we should also ensure that their legitimate trade and use are not adversely affected.

12. The Group would like to highlight the important effort made by Governments to reduce and eliminate the drug supply through alternative development programmes, including preventive alternative development programmes, as well as eradication measures. In this connection, the Group requests international organizations and States, in the spirit and principle of shared responsibility, to provide new and additional financial resources and technical assistance, consistent with multilateral trade rules, for the promotion of alternative development programmes, including in some cases preventive alternative development projects.

13. The Group stresses that alternative development programmes, including in some cases preventive alternative development, are important components in combating poverty and social marginalization, as well as in improving the quality of life at the grass roots level and providing viable socio economic opportunities. In this regard, the Group notes with appreciation the enhanced efforts to promote best practices and lessons learned from experiences in different regions of the world, in particular on sustainable alternative development programmes in the context of South-South cooperation.

14. The Group also emphasizes the importance of regional cooperation for the exchange of necessary information for the quick identification and dismantling of illicit drug trafficking networks. The Group appreciates the outcome of the Fourth Ministerial Meeting of the Triangular Initiative held in Islamabad in November 2010, with the assistance of UNODC and looks at this initiative as an example for regional counter narcotics cooperation.

15. The Group renews its call upon the international community to cooperate and to support transit states in full conformity with Article 10 of the 1988 Convention.

16. The Group of 77 and China would like to recall the important decision taken by this Commission in its 52nd session establishing the standing open-ended intergovernmental Working Group on improving the governance and financial situation of the UNODC and stresses the positive role played by the Working Group under the leadership of the Co-Chairs H.E. Ms. Norma Goicochea Estenoz (Cuba) and Mr. Ignacio Baylina Ruíz (Spain) for the last two years.

17. The Group, persistently concerned about the financial situation of UNODC and the gaps in its governance, looks forward to a decision by this Commission for the extension of the mandate of the Working Group to address the following two inter-related issues of increasing concern:

- (a) the need to enhance and make more efficient governance of UNODC and its activities, with particular attention to the principle of ownership by Member States;
- (b) the lack of sufficient and adequate funding and heavy reliance on extra budgetary resources to finance activities of UNODC, taking into account the high priority given to the mandate of the Office by UN General Assembly.

Thank you, Madame Chairperson.

Statement of the Group of 77 and China on Agenda Item 3 delivered by H.E. Ambassador Ali Asghar Soltanieh Permanent Representative of the IR of Iran

Madam Chairperson,

Introduction

1. I have the honour to address you on behalf of the Group of 77 and China under this agenda item, the importance of which is duly reflected by Resumed 53rd CND's decision to move it to a more prominent position on our agenda. Regarding the policy directives and governing role to UNODC's drug programme by this Commission, the standing open-ended intergovernmental Working Group on Improving the Governance and Financial Situation of UNODC (FinGov) plays an indispensably complementing role to the governing bodies since its establishment two years ago. For this, the Group deeply appreciates the leadership of the Co-Chairs H.E. Ms. Norma Goicochea Estenez of Cuba and Mr. Ignacio Baylina Ruíz of Spain.

FINGOV's Contribution

2. The FinGov's positive role as a formal body in the past two years is recognized widely in that it constitutes an appropriate forum for a fruitful dialogue on UNODC's programme development and implementation in a consultation and reviewing process, strengthening the trust and deepening the understanding between Member States and the Secretariat and between Member States themselves.

Mandate Renewal

3. While finding it desirable to solidify the FinGov's status as a permanent body at appropriate time, the Group would like to join the consensus to renew its mandate for a new two year period, as now envisaged in a Co-Chairs' draft ECOSOC decision. The Group also believes that, this limited renewal presents a good opportunity two years later to take stock of the achievements made and plan out future directions and priorities of its work and working method.

Governance

4. The Group emphasizes the importance of continued consultation with member states, including through FinGov, when UNODC, within its mandate, develops and implements the thematic and regional programmes in an integrated programme approach, for the delivery to Member States of technical assistance, aiming at more efficient governance of UNODC and its activities, adhering to the principle of ownership by Member States.

Finance

5. Facing an increasingly complex mandates, UNODC needs the unabated support from Member States as well as the donor community. To achieve the goal of a predictable and adequate funding, while encouraging further voluntary contributions to UNODC's mandated job, the Group is not tired of reiterating that UNODC's core activities should be funded from regular budget, complemented by more soft earmarked voluntary contributions, rather than an unstable heavy reliance on extra-budgetary resources.

Good Intention

6. Madame Chairperson, the Group, as always, remains convinced that a healthy and open-minded examination of UNODC's finance and governance situation, including thru FinGov, is conducive to confidence-building among Member States and will contribute to a sustainable funding for UNODC's much needed programmes, rather than to complicate or encumber the programme development and implementation process.

Further Expectation

7. The Group is in gratitude for the solid recommendations proposed by Sweden in a draft resolution, and regrets the FinGov informal sessions did not reach a consensus based on that. However, the Group looks forward to a constructive approach from all delegations in the forthcoming negotiations of the above two related drafts in the Committee of the Whole, without introducing any drastic or substantial amendments to such a delicate and hard-won balance as in that two drafts.

Conclusion

8. Finally, Madame Chairperson, the Group wishes FinGov sets its eyes on new horizon, advising further substantive and concrete recommendations to governing bodies, to effectively improve the governance and financial situation of UNODC.

Thank you, Madame Chairperson.