



**REMARKS BY H.E DATO' GANESON SIVAGURUNATHAN,
CHAIRPERSON OF THE GROUP OF 77 VIENNA CHAPTER
VIRTUAL DIALOGUE WITH MS. GHADA WALY,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE UNODC &
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF UNOV
23 JUNE 2020**

Her Excellency Ms. Ghada Waly, Executive Director of the UNODC and the Director General of the UNOV,

Excellencies, Ambassadors of the Group of 77
Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. It is with great pleasure that I welcome you this afternoon to the Group's first virtual Dialogue session with the Executive Director of the UNODC and the Director General of UNOV. First of all, I would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to H.E Ghada Waly, for making time, despite her busy schedule, to engage with the G77 and China. I hope today's dialogue will be a meaningful session to address issues under the framework and auspices of the UNODC.

2. We would also like take this opportunity to commend the work of the UNODC, in carrying out its responsibilities as mandated, despite the difficulties faced during the current pandemic. In this context, we would like to thank H.E Ghada Waly, for her remarks made during the FinGov last week, where she has clearly highlighted the actions and plans made by UNODC and UNOV to ensure business continuity of the organisation. In this regard, we are confident that the UNODC will achieve positive progress toward better policies and programs as planned, in addressing the world drug issues, transnational organised crimes, corruption and terrorism.

3. The efforts of the UNODC are important in this critical period, as the world is struggling to overcome the unprecedented challenges of the Covid-19. This is not just an economic crisis that we are facing today. This is a global human crisis that requires a concerted effort to fight this pandemic together. Covid-19 responses must be continuously monitored, where such measures have unintentionally providing negative impacts on vulnerable groups, such as trafficking victims.

4. As we have seen, the impact of the Covid-19 is putting the world under an enormous strain and it has been a tough experience for all countries. The developing and least developed countries are the ones that are expected to suffer the most, due to the known reasons related to the development challenges, besides their limited resources and capacities.

5. This virtual Dialogue session is one of the initiatives undertaken by the Group to engage with the Heads of Vienna based Organisations. The Group in its letter to all VBOs dated 27 May 2020 and its statement made during the third formal FinGov, has underscored some recommendations and observations under the current extraordinary circumstances. In this regard, I would like to briefly highlight some of these issues.

First, the need to review the calendar of meetings, not only for this year but for next year too;

Second, there needs to be a prioritisation of the meetings. The utmost importance is to allow for the business continuity of the organisations;

Third, in scheduling and rescheduling of meetings, it is important to consider the capacities of the Missions, especially the smaller missions;

Fourth, meetings need to be simplified and not business as usual; and

Fifth, the economic impact on all states would mean that we would see lesser participation of experts from capitals.

6. With these remarks, I now would like to invite H.E Ghada Waly to deliver her opening remarks before I open the floor for comments.