



**G-77 and China Statement during the tenth session of the Conference of the parties
of UNTOC 12-16 October 2020, delivered by H.E. Ambassador Maria Cleofe
Natividad, Permanent Representative of the Philippines**

Mr. President,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. It is my pleasure to express our sincere congratulations on your election as the President of the 10th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. I also wish to extend our heartfelt felicitations to the members of the Bureau for their election. Rest assured of our full support and cooperation for the successful conclusion of this Session.

2. The Group would like to take this opportunity to thank Italy for their leadership of the Conference for the past two years.

3. The Group also wishes to thank the Secretariat for the organization and preparation for this session of the Conference.

Mr. President,

4. In order to respect the limitation of time I will have to read parts of the Group's statement and we would like to ask the Rapporteur to reflect in the report of the Conference all elements that we submitted in our statement.

5. The Group of 77 and China celebrates with you this year the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of General Assembly resolution 55/25, in which the Assembly adopted the Convention and the Protocols thereto. Through these twenty years, the group focused its efforts to maintain the principles, goals and spirit of The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and the protocols thereto. We are certain that this important international legal instrument is the corner stone of the international cooperation in the fight against the serious and growing problem of transnational organized crime. On this occasion the group highlights the importance of promoting ratifications of the UNTOC and the Protocols thereto, which will allow Member States to strengthen cooperation in addressing this scourge.

6. We also acknowledge the efforts made by the Parties in promoting the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols and encourage all Parties to continue to strengthen such efforts.

Mr. President,

7. The Group recognizes the hard work and commitment that culminated with the adoption of resolution 9/1 of 19 October 2018 in which the Conference adopted the Procedures and Rules for the Functioning of the Mechanism for the Review of the Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational organized Crime (UNTOC) and the Protocols thereto. Now that the review process of the implementation is ready to start, the Group highlights the importance of its implementation in accordance with its Guiding principles and characteristics, as set out in the Annex of resolution 9/1.

Mr. President,

8. The Group affirms the important work of the open-ended intergovernmental Working Groups on Trafficking in Persons, Smuggling of Migrants, Firearms, Technical Assistance, and International Cooperation and we appreciate the continuous assistance of the working groups to the conference.

9. The Group wishes to underscore that the full, balanced and effective implementation of Convention and its Protocols requires a renewed commitment to fully implement UNTOC's international cooperation and technical assistance obligations. The Group considers that efforts to counter all modalities of transnational organized crime should be comprehensive and integrated, taking into account the dimensions of prevention and effective law enforcement against this crime, as well as assistance to the victims, and take into account the observation and respect for the rule of law and the promotion and protection of all human rights.

Mr. President,

10. The Group wishes to express its concern for the illicit trafficking of cultural property and related offences, including the growing involvement of organized criminal groups, and terrorist groups, which continues to inflict increasing damage to the cultural heritage of our nations, and thus, to part of our identities. In this regard, the Group stresses the need to enhance efforts to combat this crime and to implement, in accordance with domestic legal frameworks, as well as the International Guidelines for Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Responses With Respect to trafficking in cultural property and other related offenses, adopted by the General Assembly.

11. The Group recognizes the complex nature of cybercrime and will continue to actively participate in the implementation of UN GA Resolution 74/247 on elaboration of a comprehensive international convention on countering the use of information and communication technologies for criminal purposes within the framework of the United Nations, taking into full consideration existing national, regional and international instruments and efforts at the national, regional and international levels on combating the use of information and communication technologies for criminal purposes, in particular the work and outcomes of the Open Ended Intergovernmental Expert Group to conduct a comprehensive study on cybercrime". The Group supports the elaboration of a convention that takes into account, inter alia, the concerns and interests of all Member States, in particular developing countries.

12. We would also like to underscore the challenges posed by emerging forms and new dimensions of transnational organized crime, such as illegal mining in precious metals, smuggling of commercial goods, trafficking in wildlife and timber and crimes in the fishing industry that have a significant impact on the environment and/or the development of the States.

13. The Group remains strongly convinced that upholding multilateralism, including supporting an effective United Nations Development System and avoid imposing measures and actions on developing countries not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations, is essential to improve solidarity, international cooperation framework and reinforce States' capabilities to address and counter the transnational organized crimes.

Mr. President,

14. The Group reaffirms the need for enhancing international cooperation, particularly in the area of mutual legal assistance, exchange of information, extradition and identification, confiscation, seizure, recovery and repatriation of proceeds of crime, in accordance with domestic legislation, with the aim to contribute to countering the threats posed by transnational organized crime.

15. The Group firmly believes that technical assistance is a key and crosscutting issue throughout the Convention, and its provision is an essential part of the effective and efficient implementation of the Convention. Requesting State Parties should be provided with technical assistance including through the UNODC, especially for the benefit of developing countries. To this end, appropriate funding mechanisms need to be developed. The Group also highlights

the value of the expertise existing in developing countries in combating transnational organized crime.

16. The Group also highlights the importance of international cooperation, including South-South, North-South and triangular cooperation, to enhance capabilities of Member States to implement crime prevention and criminal justice programs in this framework. In this context, we would like to underline the importance of supporting capacity building and the provision of adequate, long-term, sustainable, effective and demand driven technical assistance in collaboration with UNODC. Accordingly, sufficient, stable and predictable funding is necessary.

Mr. President,

17. The Group emphasizes the need for enhancing meaningful and result-oriented international cooperation in the area of asset recovery, and the seizure and confiscation of proceeds of crime and their unconditional return to countries of origin, through all available legal mechanisms, including civil and administrative proceedings, non-trial resolutions and settlements that have proceeds of crime for confiscation and return.

18. The Group highlights once more the importance of adequate financial and administrative support for full, efficient and effective implementation of the activities assigned to the UNODC. Additionally, assuring a sufficient and stable funding to the Conference, Mechanism of the Review and to UNODC is essential to promote programmes and projects which, at the request of the benefiting country, provides the proper technical assistance to implement the Convention. The Group expresses concern over the increasing dependence of UNODC on extra budgetary resources, and therefore, reiterates that the core activities of the Office should be funded from the regular budget.

Mr. President,

19. The Group acknowledges the increasing links between transnational organized crime and other illicit activities; including drug related crime, corruption, money laundering and illicit financial flows, as well as the links that, in some cases, exist with terrorist crimes and their financing. Accordingly, the Group reaffirms the need for enhanced bilateral, regional and international cooperation in the area of exchange of information, extradition and mutual legal assistance, in accordance with domestic legislation.

20. On the particular issue of prevention of terrorism, and in order to face this challenge, the Group calls for strengthening international responses, in accordance with national legislation inter-alia, through more effective implementation and application of the Convention, and all applicable regional and international counter-terrorism legal instruments, as well as the balanced and effective implementation of the UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy. The Group calls upon UNODC and requested Member States to continue to assist requesting Member States with technical assistance to build capacity and strengthen cooperation at sub-regional, regional and international levels, in order to effectively respond to the new strategies employed by terrorist organizations. The Group strongly reaffirms that terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any religion, civilization, nationality or ethnicity, and reiterates that all efforts to counter it should be in line with international law, in particular the Charter of the United Nations, international human rights law, refugee and humanitarian law.

Mr. President,

21. The Group acknowledges that sustainable development and the rule of law are strongly interrelated and mutually reinforcing. In this regard, the Group emphasizes the need for the, balanced and effective implementation of the 2030 agenda, recognizing its integrated, indivisible, global nature and universal application.

Mr. President,

22. Finally, this session of the Conference comes at a time in which our world faces the pandemic of COVID-19 among other various challenges that need all of our efforts and collaboration to treat in an efficient and constructive manners. In this regard, the Group 77 and China appreciates that UNODC among other VBOs has adopting measures to address the COVID-19 pandemic and encourage it to continue its work to face the difficulties and challenges of the current situation and to assist State Parties in confronting the particular challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic in the area of combating transnational organized crime.

Thank you, Mr. President.