

**Handover Ceremony of the G-77 Vienna Chapter**  
**Statement by Ms. Ghada Waly, Director-General/Executive Director**

Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,  
Dear colleagues,

Good afternoon and a Happy New Year to all of you. I would like to begin by congratulating and commending the Ambassadors of the Philippines and Malaysia for their chairmanships last year, and by welcoming the incoming Chair, the Ambassador of Costa Rica.

The UN Office at Vienna and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime look forward to further strengthening our work with the G-77 Vienna Chapter.

In fact, the G-77 ceremony in February 2020, when Egypt handed over the chair to Malaysia, was one of the very first events I had the privilege to attend when I began as Director-General and Executive Director.

What a year it has been since then. My meeting with you in June was entirely virtual. Now we look back on 2020 as a year of unprecedented hardship for all our countries. And we begin 2021 with a renewed commitment to delivering for the people who need us more than ever.

The G-77 countries have been at the forefront of the work of the UN family in Vienna throughout this challenging period, which is reflected in the leadership of the Vienna-based organizations as well as the Vienna-based Commissions.

UNOV/UNODC is proud to have maintained business continuity throughout the crisis. In the face of considerable COVID-related restrictions and budget constraints, we have innovated our support to you. UNOV/UNODC were among the first in the UN system to enable inclusive participation through online and hybrid meetings, and through the use of virtual interpretation platforms.

We remain committed to maintaining this support and we rely on our Member States and donors to help us secure the needed resources.

The values of inclusion, multilingualism, geographical representation and gender equality are very important to me personally. This is reflected in the new UNODC strategy, which we elaborated with your inputs.

The strategy will guide our efforts as we expand and elevate UNODC technical cooperation delivery to Member States, to assist recovery efforts and get the world back on track to achieving the SDGs.

Alongside the overall corporate strategy and a new partnership framework, I have also developed a UNODC strategic vision for Africa, and we have now initiated a strategic vision for Latin America and the Caribbean.

I look forward to collaborating with Ambassador Solano Ortiz and the G-77 on these priorities. We have very important events on the horizon, with the rescheduled Kyoto Crime Congress; the regular sessions of the CND and CCPCJ; the first-ever UNGASS against corruption; and the ninth session of the Conference of the States Parties to the UN Convention against Corruption in Egypt.

I encourage your active engagement, and I urge G-77 members to join us at the highest possible level at the Crime Congress in March to help advance global cooperation and action on urgent crime prevention and criminal justice challenges we face in the COVID recovery and beyond. Allow me to conclude by offering my best wishes to the chair and to all of you for a peaceful, prosperous and productive 2021. Thank you.