



G-77 and China Statement during the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 11th session, 17-21 October 2022, delivered by H.E. Mr. Azzeddine Farhane, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Morocco

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 to you, a member of our Group, on your election as the President of the 11th 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 Egypt, another member of our Group, particularly, H.E. Ambassador Elmolla and his team for their leadership and commitment during 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 written statement.

5. Since the adoption of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and the protocols thereto, the Group has been focusing its efforts on maintaining the principles, goals and spirit, as well as on promoting its full and effective implementation. 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.

Mr. President,

6. The Group highlights the importance of conducting the review process of the implementation in a timely manner and in accordance with its Guiding principles and characteristics, as set out in the Annex of resolution 9/1.

Mr. President,

7. 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 contributions of the working groups to the Conference.

8. The Group wishes to underscore that the full, balanced and effective implementation of the Convention and its Protocols requires a strengthened 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, considering the dimensions of prevention and effective law enforcement, as well as assistance to the victims, and taking into account the observation and respect for the rule of law and the promotion and protection of all human rights.

Mr. President,

9. 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. The Group calls for availing the needed resources for the implementation of the relevant resolutions, including Resolution 10/7, of the Conference.

10. The Group recognizes the complex nature of crime involving use of information and communication technologies and will continue to actively participate in the implementation of UN GA Resolution 74/247 and 75/282. The Group welcomes the progress made by the Ad Hoc Committee (AHC) to Elaborate a Comprehensive International Convention on Combating the Use of Information and Communications Technologies for Criminal Purposes through the past 3 negotiating sessions and appreciates the efforts of the Chair of the AHC, H.E. Ambassador Faouzia Mebarki, Permanent Representative of Algeria and her team, as well as the Secretariat in this regard.

11. The Group highlights the critical importance of a comprehensive and well-balanced negotiating document as the basis for the upcoming negotiating sessions, taking into full consideration the concerns and interests of the developing countries. The Group requests the Secretariat to mobilize and allocate sufficient resources to continue to organize and support the work of the AHC, including ensuring financial assistance for the participation of the developing countries, especially those that do not have resident representation in Vienna, in the work of the AHC.

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

13. The Group welcomes the adoption of resolution 31/1 during the 31st session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, entitled “Strengthening the international legal framework for international cooperation to prevent and combat illicit trafficking in wildlife”, encourages Member States and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to strengthen their efforts towards its full implementation.

14. 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,

15. The Group reaffirms the need of full and effective implementation of the Convention including through international cooperation, particularly in the area of mutual legal assistance, exchange of information, extradition and identification, confiscation, seizure, recovery, unconditional return of assets and repatriation of proceeds of crime to Countries of origin with the aim to contribute to combating the threats posed by transnational organized crime.

16. 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.

17. 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,

18. 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.

19. 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,

20. 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.

21. 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 law and humanitarian law.

Mr. President,

22. Finally, 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.

Thank you, Mr. President.