



**G-77 and China Statement
during the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations
Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 13th session,
19-23 October 2026,
delivered by H.E. Shambhu S. Kumaran,
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of India**

Mr. President,

1. 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 13th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Congratulations that I extend to the members of the Bureau for their election.

2. The Group would like to take this opportunity to thank H.E. Peter Burian, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Slovakia and his team for their leadership and commitment during the Conference for the past two years.

3. The Group wishes to seize this opportunity to welcome Ms. Monica Juma, new Executive Director of the UNODC and to thank the Secretariat as well, for the organization and preparation for this session of the Conference.

Mr. President,

4. The Group expresses deep concern about the negative impact of crime on the rule of law, all human rights, socio-economic development, public health and security, the environment and cultural heritage.

5. The Group also expresses deep concern that crime is becoming increasingly transnational, organized and complex, while criminals are exploiting new and emerging technologies to carry out their illicit activities, thus creating unprecedented challenges in preventing and combating existing crimes, as well as new and emerging forms of crime, which require effective and tangible actions at national, regional and international levels, bearing in mind the common and shared responsibility of all States in preventing and combating these crimes.

6. The Group stresses the importance of coordinated national, regional and international responses to transnational organized crime strengthening collective efforts, to prevent and combat criminal groups from exploiting jurisdictional gaps, and expanding their operations through resource accumulation.

7. The Group reaffirms the role of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and its Protocols, as applicable, as the cornerstone of the international legal framework in the fight against transnational organized crime and recalls that since its adoption the Group has focused its efforts in promoting full, balanced and effective implementation, in line with its principles, goals and spirit.

8. The Group encourages ratification of the UNTOC and its Protocols thereto, which will allow Member States to strengthen and facilitate effective international cooperation and technical assistance in preventing and combating transnational organized crime.

9. The Group recalls that the implementation review mechanism must remain transparent, efficient, non-intrusive, inclusive and impartial, intergovernmental, non-punitive and non-ranking in accordance with its Guiding Principles as set out in the Annex of resolution 9/1. The Group also underlines the importance of States Parties carrying out the country reviews of the mechanism in a timely manner.

Mr. President,

10. The Group highlights the significant work of the open-ended intergovernmental Working Groups on Trafficking in Persons, Smuggling of Migrants, Firearms, Technical Assistance, and International Cooperation, and appreciates their continuous contributions to the Conference. These bodies play a pivotal role in fostering dialogue, promoting good practices, and ensuring that support provided to Member States is responsive to evolving priorities and operational realities. We encourage Member States, in a position to do so, to provide voluntary extra-budgetary financial contributions to ensure funding to enable the participation of experts from developing countries in the working groups.

11. The Group takes note of the contribution of the constructive dialogues conducted after the intergovernmental Working Groups meetings in accordance with the procedures and rules of the functioning of the mechanism for the review of the implementation of the Convention and the Protocols thereto, including that no specific country situation shall be mentioned during the constructive dialogues except that of the country under review.

12. The Group considers that efforts to counter all forms of transnational organized crime should be comprehensive and integrated, considering the dimensions of prevention and effective law enforcement, including adequate assistance to the victims and witnesses, within their means, particularly to women, children and youth, and with full respect for the rule of law and the promotion and protection of all human rights. In this regard, the Group urges Member States to prevent and address the recruitment and exploitation of children and youth by organized criminal groups, including by addressing risk factors associated with such crimes.

13. The Group strongly condemns trafficking in persons, especially women and children, which constitutes an offence under the Transnational Organized Crime Convention and the Trafficking in Persons Protocol and a serious threat to human dignity and physical integrity, human rights and sustainable development.

14. The Group also recognizes that trafficking in persons for the purpose of forced criminality is a form of trafficking that has risen in numbers. The Group urges Member States, in accordance with domestic law, to enhance cooperation to combat trafficking in persons for the purpose of forced criminality, including those related to fraud and online scam operations, and, as appropriate, to protect human trafficking victims in these operations consistent with the non-punishment principle.

15. The Group urges Member States to criminalize child sexual exploitation and abuse, including online sexual abuse and exploitation of children and child sexual abuse and

exploitation material, allowing for the prosecution of perpetrators, to grant law enforcement agencies appropriate powers and to provide tools to identify victims and perpetrators and their hotspots in order to effectively combat child sexual exploitation and abuse.

Mr. President,

16. The Group welcomes the adoption of the United Nations Convention against Cybercrime: *Strengthening International Cooperation for Combating Certain Crimes Committed by Means of Information and Communications Technology Systems and for the Sharing of Evidence in Electronic Form of Serious Crimes*, and encourages States to consider signing and ratifying the Convention in order to ensure its early entry into force and to make the best efforts to adopt its rules of procedure.

17. In this regard, the Group emphasizes the need to strengthen international cooperation in combating crimes committed through information and communications technology systems such as online scams, ransomware attacks, cyber fraud, and cyber enabled trafficking in persons in today's rapidly evolving digital landscape.

Mr. President,

18. 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 continue to inflict increasing damage to the cultural heritages of our nations, and in the process erode our identities.

19. The Group expresses its concern for the illicit nature of trafficking in cultural property, and its transnational dimension, and stresses the importance of strengthening international cooperation, including through mutual legal assistance, in particular with regard to the return or restitution of trafficked cultural property, and the need to enhance efforts to combat these crimes and to implement the International Guidelines for Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Responses with Respect to Trafficking in Cultural Property and Other Related Offences, in accordance with domestic law.

20. The Group underscores the need to address crimes that affect the environment falling within the scope of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

21. The Group underscores the need to better understand and enhance its efforts, in accordance with each Member's national law, against the smuggling of commercial goods.

22. The Group acknowledges any existing, increasing or potential links, in some cases, between transnational organized crime and illicit activities in particular, drug trafficking, trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants, fraud including online scams, illegal mining, money laundering, illicit financial flows, terrorism and its financing, among others, while reaffirming the need for enhanced bilateral, sub-regional, regional and international cooperation in the area of information exchange, extradition and mutual legal assistance, in accordance with domestic law, with the aim of contributing to eradicating the threat posed by transnational organized crime.

23. On the particular issue of preventing and combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and in order to face this challenge, the Group calls for strengthening

international responses, in accordance with national law and the implementation and application of the UNTOC, and all applicable regional and international counter-terrorism legal instruments, as well as of the UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy.

24. 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.

Mr. President,

25. The Group reiterates its serious concern over any form of ranking of Member States for the purposes of international cooperation in criminal matters. We remain strongly convinced that upholding multilateralism, including supporting an effective United Nations development system and avoid promulgating, maintaining and imposing any unilateral coercive measures and actions, including sanctions and restrictions, on developing countries that are in contravention of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, is essential to improve solidarity, international cooperation framework and reinforce States' capabilities on preventing and combating transnational organized crime.

26. The Group encourages multidisciplinary efforts to prevent and combat transnational organized crime through cooperation and coordination between law enforcement and other criminal justice institutions, and other governmental sectors, as well as to support their work, by engaging in and fostering partnerships with relevant stakeholders, in accordance with domestic law, as appropriate.

27. The Group reaffirms the need of full and effective implementation of the Convention including through meaningful and result-oriented international cooperation, particularly in the area of mutual legal assistance, exchange of information, extradition and identification, seizure, confiscation, recovery, unconditional and timely return of assets and proceeds of crime to countries of origin, and to their rightful owners, with the aim to contribute to combating the threats posed by transnational organized crime.

28. The Group firmly believes that adequate, long-term, sustainable, effective and demand-driven material and technical assistance, tailored to the needs and priorities of the requesting State, transfer of technology and provision of equipment, are key and crosscutting throughout the Convention and essential for its effective and efficient implementation, and the Group highlights the value of the expertise provided by the countries of the Global South in international efforts to prevent and combat transnational organized crime and emphasizes the importance of providing technical assistance without conditionalities.

29. The Group underscores the continued relevance and important role played by the UNODC in providing technical assistance and capacity-building to Member States, in particular developing countries. Furthermore, the Group notes with appreciation the work done by UNODC in the field of technical assistance programmes, including support for legislative and policy development, strengthening of criminal justice institutions, specialized training and enhanced international cooperation. The Group highlights that such programmes have contributed meaningfully to strengthening national capacities and enabling Member States to address transnational organized crime in accordance with their national priorities and circumstances.

30. The Group also highlights the importance of international cooperation, including South-South, North-South and triangular cooperation, to enhance capabilities of Member States to prevent, detect and effectively combat transnational organized crime.

31. The Group highlights once more the importance of adequate financial and administrative support to the UNODC, to enable it to fulfill its mandates. Additionally, assuring a sufficient, predictable and stable funding to the Conference and the Implementation Review Mechanism of the of UNTOC is essential to promote programmes and projects which, at the request of the benefiting country, provides the proper technical assistance to implement the Convention.

32. The Group highlights multilingualism as an essential principle of the United Nations for ensuring mutual understanding and the equitable participation of States, particularly developing countries, and notes that it contributes to making the Organization more efficient, effective, representative, and transparent, while connecting it to the people it serves.

33. 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.

34. The Group kindly requests the UNODC to intensify its efforts to ensure that the principle of equitable geographical distribution, and gender balance are fully incorporated in its recruitment policy, both at headquarters, and its Field Offices, particularly at the senior and policy-making levels and for professional posts requiring specific skills.

Mr. President,

35. 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 a balanced and effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda, recognizing its integrated, indivisible, global nature and universal application.

Thank you, Mr. President.