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Chair: Mr. Braun (Luxembourg)

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda item 106: Crime prevention and criminal justice (A/74/125, A/74/126, A/74/127 and A/74/128)

Agenda item 107: Countering the use of information and communications technologies for criminal purposes (A/74/130)

Agenda item 108: International drug control
(continued) (A/74/125, A/74/126, A/74/127, A/74/128, A/74/129 and A/74/130)

1. **Mr. Brandolino** (Director, Division of Treaty Affairs, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)), speaking on behalf of the Executive Director of UNODC, said that the Office was supporting preparations for the fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, which would focus on advancing crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law for implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The best way to meet the Sustainable Development Goals was to build on shared commitments and agreed frameworks, as illustrated by global efforts to reduce corruption and recover stolen assets.

2. The United Nations Convention against Corruption remained the principal instrument supporting anti-corruption action. The eighth session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Convention would continue the work under the Convention's peer review mechanism, which was an important means of encouraging implementation. Following a decade of negotiation, Member States had also agreed on a review mechanism for the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and its protocols on human trafficking, migrant smuggling and firearms. In 2020 Member States would celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the Convention, a document that had underpinned global responses to evolving and emerging transnational challenges, including maritime crime, wildlife and forest crime and cybercrime.

3. In response to General Assembly resolution 73/187, UNODC had prepared a report on countering the use of information and communications technologies for criminal purposes (A/74/130), which contained information on the views of Member States in that regard. In the report, Member States had highlighted the importance of international cooperation in combating cybercrime, an area in which UNODC was working with Governments to provide training for police officers, prosecutors and judges. Enhancing responses to the misuse of technologies for criminal and terrorist purposes, including money-laundering, was a major priority. UNODC was helping Member States to

disrupt those threats through integrated national, regional and interregional responses and operational coordination. It was also providing scientific and forensic support and strengthening capacities to identify, secure and evaluate evidence. To achieve those goals, it was seeking synergies with partners across the United Nations system and with regional organizations, civil society, the private sector and parliamentarians, among others.

4. UNODC was part of the Executive Committee of the United Nations Network on Migration and provided technical assistance to prevent and counter migrant smuggling and human trafficking. As coordinator of the Inter-agency Coordination Group Against Trafficking in Persons, UNODC was working with partners to strengthen collective efforts against those crimes. In coordination with the Office of Counter-Terrorism and others, UNODC had stepped up support to combat the financing of terrorism, including by tackling its linkages with organized crime. It was also helping countries to deal with the challenges posed by returning foreign terrorist fighters.

5. Partnerships supporting balanced, science- and rights-based approaches to drugs were a mainstay of UNODC support to Member States for addressing and countering the world drug problem, in line with the ministerial declaration that was agreed during the high-level segment of the sixty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. In that context, UNODC facilitated the exchange of expertise and experiences within the Commission and led a United Nations system coordination task team. It also provided assistance on the ground to promote international standards on drug use prevention and treatment, as well as effective law enforcement and judicial cooperation to counter trafficking of illicit drugs and precursors.

6. The work of UNODC was focused on prevention, including by supporting alternative development with a view to preventing the cultivation of illicit crops; implementing programmes with an emphasis on public-private partnerships and community empowerment; and supporting Member States in providing treatment as an alternative to imprisonment and punishment for people with drug use disorders and in improving access to controlled medicines for pain relief, while preventing diversion and abuse. As a sponsoring organization of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, UNODC facilitated the development, implementation and scaling up of HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment for drug users and prisoners. Prevention was also at the core of its support for promoting human rights-compliant and gender-sensitive crime prevention and criminal justice reforms. UNODC worked to prevent the

involvement of children in crime and violence and to stop their recruitment and exploitation by terrorists. It also assisted Member States in reducing imprisonment through crime prevention and improved access to legal aid. It promoted sound prison management, including the management of violent extremist prisoners, and prevention of radicalization in prisons and in probation settings.

7. The comprehensive approach of UNODC was backed by field expertise and experience, along with research and analysis. In 2019 UNODC had provided the international community with research exploring conflict situations and vulnerability to human trafficking and examining the opioid crises affecting different parts of the world. It had also investigated drivers of high levels of violence while identifying success factors for its reduction. It continued to implement Secretariat-wide reforms to streamline processes and integrate programming in line with development system reforms.

8. **Mr. Gimolieca** (Angola), speaking on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), said that although the burden of crime persisted in the Community's member States, the authorities were gradually asserting better control, partly through complex work on digital and communication platforms. Prevention and mitigation policies and more effective strategies were helping the region to become better prepared to respond to offenders head-on and prevent criminal activities. SADC attached considerable importance to the international legal instruments that laid the legal foundations for action against transnational organized crime, corruption and drug-related offences.

9. Drug trafficking and drug abuse were related to other crimes, such as corruption, violent crime and violence, which undermined economic development and the region's security and stability. High rates of poverty and unemployment, weak justice systems and a high prevalence of HIV/AIDS were some of the root causes. Uneven economic development and high levels of social inequality, both within and among countries, also acted as drivers of organized crime in the region.

10. Illicit trade in wildlife, fuelled by commercial poaching and growing market demand, was one of the most prevalent forms of crime in the subregion. Despite significant strides in wildlife conservation, transnational organized groups took advantage of the ease of cross-border trade, disparities in countries' legislation and a deficient system for sharing information among law enforcement agencies. SADC urged the international community to address illicit trade in wildlife as a

priority. SADC welcomed initiatives under the UNODC Global Programme for Combating Wildlife and Forest Crime to enhance the law enforcement capacity in the region, improve prevention and mitigation policies and strategies and foster collaboration with local and international institutions.

11. Clear and comprehensive legislation was needed to prevent and combat the increasing number of human trafficking cases in the SADC region, especially those involving women and children. The fact that all SADC member States were party to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, demonstrated the region's commitment to global, continental and regional legislative frameworks on trafficking in persons. Of the 16 SADC member States, 13 had stand-alone legislation on trafficking in persons, while the others had criminalized the practice through a variety of legislative instruments. Strategies against child abuse and human trafficking needed to be developed to protect women and children and address challenges to the implementation and enforcement of legislation.

12. Illicit traffic of every kind facilitated the spread of contraband, generating large profits for the individuals and organizations involved. The increasing drug problem in the region jeopardized prosperity and the future of young people, who were often disproportionately affected by drug related crime and drug abuse. The drug problem required a multidimensional and balanced approach encompassing criminal, social and health policies. The drug policies of SADC member States were based on the Protocol on Combating Illicit Drug Trafficking in the Southern African Development Community Region. The member States had responded to the drug problem by developing, implementing and evaluating strategies for reducing demand, establishing community prevention programmes, raising awareness in schools and carrying out research into the underlying causes of drug abuse. Some countries had also established facilities for the treatment, rehabilitation and social integration of drug-dependent persons. Young people were an important part of the solution.

13. The criminal justice systems of many SADC countries were still weak, lacking not only capacity for crime prevention and prosecution services, but also legislation on transnational crimes. Since criminal activities in the region increasingly transcended national borders, future prevention efforts must rely on global and regional cooperation. SADC member States had signed protocols on mutual legal assistance in criminal

matters; extradition; corruption; combating illicit drugs; and firearms, ammunition and other related materials. In response to the growing threats, they were working to improve the capacity and transparency of their justice systems.

14. SADC had launched a 2013–2020 regional programme to help its member States respond to challenges related to organized crime, security, the effectiveness and integrity of their criminal justice systems, drug abuse and HIV/AIDS by building capacity at the national level and promoting regional cooperation, in line with each country's priorities and needs. The programme, which would also contribute to reducing crime levels by fostering sustainable socioeconomic development, could serve as a basis for initiatives in other regions with similar development challenges.

15. **Ms. Tang** (Singapore), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that the size of the South-East Asian region, which included some of the world's busiest trade routes, made it vulnerable to transnational crimes such as terrorism, cybercrime, international economic crime, illicit drug trafficking and trafficking in persons. To coordinate its response to such threats, ASEAN held an annual Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime. In the past year, it had also worked on the implementation of the ASEAN Plan of Action in Combating Transnational Crime (2016–2025); a work programme for 2019–2021 to implement the Plan of Action; and the Bohol Trafficking in Persons Work Plan 2017–2020; and had developed a matrix for monitoring implementation of the Work Plan.

16. Combating the illicit drug trade required close cooperation within ASEAN and with the international community. Some success had been achieved in the reduction of opium poppy cultivation areas in the region, but new challenges continued to emerge as the business models of drug syndicates evolved. The Association's commitment to tackling those challenges had led to the adoption, at the fifth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters, of the ASEAN Work Plan on Securing Communities Against Illicit Drugs 2016–2025; the launch in 2017 of the ASEAN Cooperation Plan to Tackle Illicit Drug Production and Trafficking in the Golden Triangle; and the delivery in 2018 and 2019 of joint statements against the legalization of controlled drugs, which had reaffirmed its commitment to maintaining a zero-tolerance approach to drugs and promoting communities that were free of drug abuse.

17. The ASEAN Narcotics Cooperation Centre and the ASEAN Drug Monitoring Network had been established

to improve sharing among Member States of information on the latest regional drug trends. The ASEAN Airport Interdiction Task Force and ASEAN Seaport Interdiction Task Force had disrupted the flow of drugs across the region. The ASEAN Preventive Drug Education Portal had been created to share useful resources, and rehabilitation treatment coverage had been scaled up to include evidence-based and community-based programmes. The three main international drug control conventions continued to serve as the cornerstone of global drug policy.

18. In an effort to strengthen the region's collective capabilities to counter radicalization, ASEAN had adopted the ASEAN Plan of Action to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalization and Violent Extremism (2018–2025), which provided a substantive framework for ASEAN member States to develop law enforcement capabilities, engage vulnerable communities and empower youth.

19. To facilitate meaningful discussions, promote regional cooperation and share best practices on aviation security, ASEAN had organized a counter-terrorism conference on aviation security in collaboration with the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL). On the issue of cybercrime, ASEAN had issued a statement on cybersecurity cooperation, which had reaffirmed its commitment to developing a peaceful, secure and resilient rules-based cyberspace. ASEAN had also held the ASEAN Plus Three Cybercrime Conference to foster meaningful partnerships with regional enforcement agencies and private stakeholders to fight the global threat of cybercrime. The Conference had taken place after the launch of the ASEAN Cyber Capability Desk, which had enhanced the ability of law enforcement agencies to combat cybercrime.

20. **Mr. Kapambwe** (Zambia), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that conflicts, climate change and growing economic inequality between countries and among communities continued to force people to leave their homes in search of new opportunities, thereby exposing them to trafficking, forced labour, sexual exploitation, abuse and death at the hands of cross-border criminal networks. New technologies and networks, while contributing positively to sustainable development, market access and economic growth, were also enabling new forms of crime, including cybercrime. Women and children were major victims of those heinous crimes. Given that developing countries were lagging behind in cybercrime defences, it was imperative for developing States to be given technical and financial support to fully and effectively implement the United Nations Convention

against Transnational Organized Crime and its protocol on human trafficking.

21. In Africa, drug abuse remained a legal issue, drug trafficking was a criminal matter and both issues constituted a prevalent global menace. More resources were therefore needed for prevention, treatment, counselling and social reintegration programmes.

22. The Group was committed to fighting corruption and strengthening good governance and the rule of law. The Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union had declared 2018 as the African Anti-Corruption Year, had entrusted Nigeria to be an advocate for the fight against corruption and had encouraged member States to curb corruption and fight inequality.

23. Domestic public resources were considered essential for development financing. However, a variety of factors affected the ability of countries in Africa to generate tax revenues, including the presence of large informal and subsistence sectors, narrow tax bases and dependence on volatile export commodities. Domestic resources were further undermined by illicit financial flows in the form of illegal activities, including corruption; human trafficking and trafficking in minerals, wildlife and drugs; tax evasion; and organized crime. Such flows reduced much-needed resources for sustainable development, undermined governance, fostered corruption and facilitated transnational organized crime and terrorism. In that regard, the Group welcomed the emphasis placed in the 2030 Agenda on fighting illicit financial flows. The Group underscored the need for Governments and institutions to demonstrate transparency and accountability.

24. With regard to crime prevention and criminal justice, the Group believed that laws worked when they were perceived as fair and just. Crime denied people opportunities, undermined economic development growth and the rule of law and eroded people's faith in Governments. The report of the Secretary-General showed that men made up the majority of the prison population in all regions. The African Group agreed with the Secretary-General that crime prevention methods should specifically target men and boys and include efforts to mitigate the conditions that increased vulnerability to criminal behaviour.

25. During negotiations related to the political declaration for the fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, it was important to discuss how to control cybercrime and terrorist attacks in the midst of conflict. The Group called for an outcome that was action-oriented and could be implemented by all parties. Police, prosecutors and

judges should receive training to enable them to better enforce laws.

26. **Mr. Rattray** (Jamaica), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that the level of crime in the Caribbean region had worrisome implications for the health and well-being of its societies. States in the region needed to confront the challenges posed by porous borders, irregular migration, the transshipment of drugs, the flow of illegal firearms and emerging threats in cyberspace. The added pressures that natural disasters and other devastating impacts of climate change placed upon already burdened security systems could not be ignored. Such events could result in humanitarian crises, which could in turn give rise to violence and criminal activity. CARICOM was therefore committed to the full implementation of its strategic plan for 2015–2019, to ensure a safe and secure community for its people. The region had increased its efforts to address the social determinants of crime, raise public awareness and mobilize regional action.

27. Security cooperation was the fourth pillar of the CARICOM integration movement. The CARICOM Heads of Government, at their thirtieth intersessional meeting, had reiterated the importance to the region of the national and regional security architectures in combating crime and violence, transnational crime and other security threats, and for the effective functioning of the CARICOM single market and economy free movement regimes.

28. The Community had devised key strategies to ensure safety and security, including by increasing the resilience of the region, reducing its vulnerabilities and undertaking statistical data collection. Other efforts included preparing a CARICOM crime prevention and social development plan; adopting an agreement on the return and sharing of assets recovered from criminal activity; working on a road map for the development of crime and criminal justice statistics; developing a regional integrated ballistic information network; and working to establish new, and strengthen existing, drug treatment courts.

29. The high levels of gun-related crimes stemmed from the nexus between the illicit trade in drugs and the illicit importation of small arms, which were used in at least 75 per cent of violent crimes in the region, including those related to gang and drug-related activities. Given the high number of firearm-related homicides across the region, closer collaboration was needed between national, regional and international law enforcement agencies, particularly those responsible for border security on land and sea. CARICOM called on

the international community to lend its support for the development of legislation and the further ratification and implementation of international instruments aimed at addressing those issues.

30. The world drug problem and the illicit drug economy destabilized security and negatively affected the health and economic and social development of vulnerable States. CARICOM had welcomed the opportunity to engage in discussions at the sixty-second session of the Commission on Narcotics Drugs and the recently concluded fifth intersessional meeting of the Commission. It also welcomed the response from the World Health Organization, which supported greater flexibility for countries to craft policies that were best suited to their national contexts.

31. CARICOM was committed to gender balance and applauded the contributions made by women towards addressing transnational organized crime and drug trafficking in the Caribbean region. In a context in which its citizens had become targets for recruitment by extremist organizations, CARICOM looked forward to hosting a United Nations conference on counter-terrorism in Trinidad and Tobago in 2020.

32. **Mr. Forax** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the issues under consideration affected every Member State and threatened the core priorities of the sustainable development agenda. The United Nations system provided a forum that supported the action to be taken by each Government and encouraged cooperation.

33. The European Union had a solid and ambitious legal and policy framework to combat trafficking in persons. The European Union remained committed to multilateralism and reaffirmed the need to forge partnerships that upheld international legal standards. It had aligned its development assistance on trafficking in persons with the 2030 Agenda. As demonstrated by the 2018 progress report, a great deal had been achieved with regard to areas such as cross-border cooperation, the use of financial investigations and developing national and transnational referral mechanisms. Nevertheless, there remained a high level of impunity for perpetrators of such crimes, which must be brought to an end to ensure accountability.

34. Saving lives and fighting migrant smuggling was at the core of all European Union action to reduce irregular migration. The European Union and its member States would continue to fight migrant

smugglers and their deadly business model. States must continue to invest resources and find innovative ways to tackle crime networks, which were increasingly quick to exploit policy gaps and reinvent their modus operandi. In December 2018, the European Union had adopted law-enforcement measures to step up the fight against migrant smuggling networks. The measures were designed to maximize the use of the European Union external assets in the fight against migrant smuggling, by strengthening the links between internal and external action and working with partner countries to support their law enforcement activities and improve cooperation.

35. Migrant smuggling posed security threats and undermined social cohesion in all countries of origin, transit and destination. All Member States had an interest in stronger cooperation against smugglers. Significant European Union funding was being allocated to projects such as the European Union military operation in the Southern Central Mediterranean, thanks to which a significant number of smugglers had been arrested and hundreds of vessels seized. At the same time, European Union civilian missions in Libya, Mali and the Niger were supporting capacity-building for national police and other security forces to counter migrant smuggling in a manner consistent with human rights and the rule of law.

36. Maritime crime and trafficking at sea were increasingly recognized as among the most serious threats to common security and the global economy. In 2019, the European Union had adopted a revised action plan on maritime security, which promoted a holistic perspective of maritime security, supported regional, tailor-made responses to challenges, and called for stronger collaboration between civilian and military actors and among specialized agencies. The plan had been consistent with the Arria-formula meeting of the Security Council on maritime crime as a threat to international peace and security, which had provided an opportunity to identify good practices for strengthening prevention mechanisms and responses to maritime crime.

37. The European Union had also adopted an improved legal framework to combat money-laundering. All Member States must step up their efforts and make it more difficult for terrorists and criminals to profit from crime.

38. The implementation of joint commitments on drugs should be accelerated. The common United Nations system position on drug policy was a step in the right direction in response to the growing need for a multidimensional approach. The European Union held

regular dialogues on drugs with partner countries and provided assistance through external cooperation programmes. The European Union would like to see a stronger connection between the 2030 Agenda and the world drug problem. It also continued to unequivocally oppose the use of the death penalty at all times and under all circumstances, including for drug-related crimes, and promoted responses to such crimes that were in line with international law and standards and the principle of proportionality. In order to implement joint commitments to address the world drug problem in line with those principles, the European Union was considering updating its drugs strategy and action plan.

39. The Expert Group to Conduct a Comprehensive Study on Cybercrime played an important role by providing a comprehensive overview and should remain the main process at the level of the United Nations on the topic of cybercrime. There was broad consensus on the essential role of capacity-building in addressing cybercrime. However, many countries still needed to adopt specific procedural powers to secure electronic evidence and develop the necessary capacities to apply procedural powers in practice; capacity-building should thus remain the priority for the future. Consensus was lacking on the need and feasibility of a new international treaty on cybercrime; priority should therefore be given to cooperation on the basis of existing treaties.

40. The European Union had improved the counter-terrorism instruments at its disposal and cooperated with partner countries on the subject. It supported the key role of the United Nations on counter-terrorism and contributed to the biannual review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which would continue to guide its own efforts.

41. **Mr. Zeng** Weixiong (China) said that the international community had made good progress on drug control, combating transnational organized crime and fighting corruption, but daunting challenges remained. Cooperation must be further strengthened through innovation, the rule of law, and a win-win approach. Over the past year, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and UNODC had promoted implementation of the conventions on drug control, transnational organized crime and corruption. His Government stood ready to provide more human resources and funding to UNODC.

42. On the subject of drugs, China would continue to follow the principle of broad participation and shared responsibility, implement a comprehensive and balanced drug control strategy and actively implement the relevant conventions. China prioritized prevention,

rehabilitation and treatment, was strengthening enforcement and engaged in international cooperation to tackle new drug challenges. China would constantly improve the scheduling of substances. His country firmly upheld the international drug control system and supported the work of the relevant United Nations bodies.

43. China was concerned by the recent recommendation from the World Health Organization for cannabis to be reclassified. While human rights must be respected in drug control, drug abuse must not be indulged in the name of harm reduction, and China opposed the legalization of any drug. A balance must be struck between deterrence and human rights protection. China expected the 2019 ministerial declaration of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs to play a positive role and called on all parties to continue to address the world drug problem in an integrated and balanced manner based on common and shared responsibilities.

44. The Government of China had launched a zero-tolerance anti-corruption campaign. In 2018, a national supervisory commission had been established to promote legalization and standardization of work and participate in international anti-corruption governance and cooperation efforts. China supported United Nations authority in global anti-corruption governance and the role of the United Nations Convention against Corruption as the main channel, and called on all parties to implement the Convention effectively, eliminate political and legal obstacles to cross-border tracking of fugitives and criminal proceeds, strengthen judicial and law enforcement cooperation and resolve thorny issues such as asset recovery. Over the past decade, the Convention's implementation review mechanism had run smoothly. All parties should continue to observe the principle of non-interference in internal affairs. China would strictly abide by the review process, complete its review and continue to provide countries with capacity-building assistance as needed.

45. Through its implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, China had improved its legislative and judicial architecture, strengthened departmental coordination and communication, stepped up law enforcement and international cooperation, and achieved good results in combating human trafficking and crimes involving guns and explosives. China supported the Convention's implementation review mechanism and called on States to adopt the Convention as a legal basis for mutual legal assistance, extradition and asset recovery. China continued to participate in preparations for the Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and promote

consultations on the outcome document in an open and transparent manner. Regarding non-traditional security challenges, China was actively fighting cybercrime.

46. **Ms. Suzuki** (Japan) said that the rule of law, good governance and a culture of lawfulness were essential elements of a prosperous human society. In April 2020, Japan would host the Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and called on all Member States to participate actively and ensure cohesion between the Congress and other United Nations bodies.

47. Member States must implement drug control policies in a coordinated manner. Japan supported the Commission on Narcotic Drugs as the primary policymaking body and was implementing the Commission's 2019 ministerial declaration.

48. The use of social media in terrorist attacks was an urgent issue. As Chair of the Group of 20 Summit held in Osaka in June 2019, Japan had taken the lead in drafting a leaders' statement on preventing exploitation of the Internet for terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism. The question of how to regulate social media platforms while respecting freedom of expression required careful consideration. In addition, growth and competition within that industry must not be jeopardized. Japan would deepen its discussions with Governments, industry leaders, academia and civil society.

49. Criminals were able to commit cybercrimes by exploiting vulnerable countries that lacked effective countermeasures. The international community must bridge that gap, and Japan was supporting capacity-building programmes. The Expert Group to Conduct a Comprehensive Study on Cybercrime was the ideal forum in which to identify trends, challenges and ways forward.

50. Corruption posed a serious threat to economic growth and sustainable development. Under the chairmanship of Japan, the Group of 20 Anti-Corruption Working Group had given priority in 2019 to infrastructure development and effective whistle-blower protection, and it had agreed on two sets of deliverables. Japan was determined to continue to contribute to international anti-corruption efforts, including through effective implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

51. **Ms. Oehri** (Liechtenstein) said that measures to counter cybercrime had been adopted at national and regional levels, and the United Nations had an important role to play in regulating cybercrime at the international level. Her delegation hoped that broad common interest

in a strengthened rule of law in cyberspace would drive future discussions.

52. Cybersecurity fell within the United Nations core mission. Trends towards an increasingly militarized cyberspace, developments in artificial intelligence, pervasive data collection and manipulation, and cybercrime posed real security risks to States and their citizens and needed to be analysed in the context of the existing legal framework and addressed across all three pillars of the United Nations. Strengthening international law included extending the fight against impunity to the online domain. It was imperative to understand the extent to which existing international law applied to cyberattacks and cyberwarfare.

53. Cybersecurity laws and policies had a direct impact on human rights, particularly the right to privacy. Any interference with the right to privacy must be consistent with the principles of legality, necessity and proportionality. A careful balance must therefore be struck between security concerns and respect for human rights. Liechtenstein strongly supported the strengthening of international law concerning activities in cyberspace through regulations based on transparency, cooperation and human rights, and opposed the development of parallel and diverging normative standards on the subject.

54. Recent reports by a number of United Nations special rapporteurs showed that many States were acting in ways that threatened the right to privacy and other human rights. Some States increasingly employed new technologies that violated the right to privacy, including the use of big data and health data and arbitrary surveillance of their own citizens. Gender, race, class, social origin and religion were among the factors that determined who was being watched, making certain individuals more likely to suffer violations of their right to privacy and other human rights. Intelligence agencies had increased their use of surveillance, purportedly to counter terrorism or violent extremism, which had undermined society's trust in the State and its institutions and in the rule of law itself.

55. It was vitally important for Member States to protect the right to privacy in line with international law and uphold the rule of law. Only if citizens could enjoy their fundamental freedoms and human rights without fearing discrimination, persecution or punishment could States create societies that were peaceful, just and inclusive, as set out in Sustainable Development Goal 16.

56. **Mr. Baror** (Israel) said that the drug control authority in Israel had undergone a major reform in 2017–2018. It had been re-established within the

Ministry of Public Security, which led the country's efforts in preventing violence, and drug and alcohol abuse. Community was a key focus; local and municipal authorities were recognized as key players, and the aim was to establish a continuum of prevention, early identification, treatment and re-integration, taking into consideration gender, age and cultural sensitivities.

57. Prevention efforts, which started as early as kindergarten and continued throughout school, included life skills programmes and the promotion of healthy lifestyles. Outreach was a key aspect of demand reduction strategies, since young people, particularly those at high risk, did not tend to actively seek out services. In addition, a range of activities, such as workshops and lectures, targeted parents and significant adults. There was also an emphasis on recruiting and training members of the community, such as bartenders and taxi drivers, to act as gatekeepers, since they often witnessed risky behaviours first hand. The "parents' patrol" programme, which involved parents volunteering to walk around popular youth hangouts to talk to young people and help them manage risky situations, was also proving effective. Such activities contributed to achieving the goal of making cities and communities safe, resilient and sustainable, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.

58. A new reform decriminalizing the use of cannabis for first-time offenders had come into effect over the past year, representing a shift from criminal enforcement to education, prevention and treatment. A complementary evidence-based plan was being developed in parallel to the reform, and it would cover seven key areas, including public campaigns, training aids and rehabilitation programmes.

59. A global commitment to combating the pandemic of drug abuse was required; States had a common responsibility to share best practices and knowledge in order to achieve the global goals that had been set.

60. **Ms. Hasan** (Iraq) said that her country, like all others, was not immune to the negative repercussions of transnational organized crime. Unprecedented terrorist and criminal attacks had jeopardized the safety and security of society in Iraq, claiming the lives of thousands of innocent civilians and destroying cities and towns. The Government of Iraq had adopted many pieces of legislation on combating drugs, including Decision No. 50 of 2017, which set out a national strategy and policy to combat the drug problem and treat addicts. Iraq had also established a supreme committee on combating drugs, presided over by the Minister of Health. Its high-level members represented various national crime prevention organizations.

Subcommittees had been established in all Iraqi provinces. The Government was currently amending certain legislative provisions, with a view to encouraging addicts to seek specialist treatment so that they could be reintegrated into their families and society.

61. Trafficking in persons was an international phenomenon that affected almost every country as a place of origin, transit or destination. Iraq had spared no effort to implement the Trafficking in Persons Protocol, including through legislation that included Act No. 28 of 2012 on combating trafficking in persons and Act No. 58 of 2017 on the protection of witnesses, experts, whistle-blowers and victims. A supreme central committee to combat trafficking in persons had been established in 2018, with 15 members representing various Iraqi ministries and chaired by the Ministry of the Interior.

62. **Mr. Butt** (Pakistan) said that UNODC had supported the establishment of effective mechanisms in his country for cooperation between the police and prosecution departments in order to improve the criminal justice system. Pakistan sincerely appreciated such technical assistance, which helped Member States to fight transnational organized crime.

63. As the world drug problem persisted, his delegation was particularly concerned about the steady rise in poppy cultivation and production in the region. As one of the most affected transit States, Pakistan was working on the three main pillars of supply reduction, demand reduction and international cooperation. The emerging trend of legalizing the use of illicit drugs was counter-productive and would only result in increasing drug demand, with a direct impact on the region.

64. The increased use of new technologies by criminal groups and the transnational nature of money-laundering, cybercrime, corruption and human smuggling and trafficking made investigation and prosecution extremely difficult. Comprehensive and integrated crime prevention and criminal justice responses were vital for countering transnational criminal groups. Pakistan was a party to eight United Nations conventions related to transnational organized crime and had set up an independent financial monitoring unit to cooperate with other countries in combating money-laundering and terrorist financing.

65. **Mr. Ahmed** (Maldives) said that the world drug problem posed a serious threat to development and social stability. His country was deeply concerned by the rise in opioid use and the misuse of pharmaceutical drugs. Maldives was located at the crossroads of one of the most important and busiest transshipment routes in

the world, which made it vulnerable to drug traffickers, and it needed cooperation and support from its partners in order to effectively monitor and safeguard those routes. With over a thousand islands, Maldives faced significant challenges in instituting effective border control measures. The Government was committed to increasing the surveillance of the waters and to strengthening customs regulations, among other measures.

66. To reduce demand for drugs, it was important to raise awareness of their dangers and harmful effects. The new Government was also committed to increasing the capacity of the health system to handle drug addiction and rehabilitation at the national and local levels.

67. Criminals were increasingly using information and communications technologies to further their activities. The national police force was using modern technology and working closely with INTERPOL to help counter criminal activities.

68. Criminal justice was the cornerstone of a modern and just society. Maldives had passed a number of laws in areas such as human trafficking, money-laundering and terrorism financing to increase the transparency and efficacy of its judicial system. The country would continue to reform and strengthen its criminal justice system to meet emerging and new challenges.

69. **Ms. Salim** (Afghanistan) said that transnational issues such as the world's drug problem required a multilateral approach. Numerous variables were at play; in Afghanistan, drug production was driven by both domestic and external factors. Externally, high international demand had contributed to the growth of local illegal drug markets, and drug precursors were being smuggled into Afghanistan by transnational criminal groups. Domestically, challenges such as the ongoing conflict and poverty had aggravated the problem.

70. Between 2.9 and 3.5 million Afghans were affected by the global drug epidemic. Her Government was implementing counter-narcotic policies and strategies to tackle the problem effectively. While the total area used for drug cultivation and production had decreased by 20 per cent in 2018, drug production remained at a record high. Moreover, 53 per cent of the farmland used for drug production was controlled by anti-government and insurgent groups.

71. To counteract the effects of socioeconomic grievances and inequalities, her Government was using social and economic tools within a national peace and development framework to increase sustainable social

welfare. The aim was to empower local communities by providing individuals with the tools to improve their job skills and thus gain access to employment.

72. In 2018, a prolonged drought had severely affected the agricultural sector. Dry conditions were, however, conducive to the growth of opium-producing poppies. To manage the water supply more effectively, her Government was developing canals so that farmers could cultivate alternative crops. One project being run by the ministry of agriculture promoted the cultivation of aloe vera as an alternative to poppy.

73. Afghanistan was committed to mitigating drug production, but needed ongoing support from the international community. An effective approach required a focus also on transit and consumption. The issue of drugs was a collective threat that required a collective response. Afghanistan called for enhanced regional and international cooperation, including through a regional counter-narcotics strategy.

74. **Ms. Inanç Örnekol** (Turkey) said that her country, as a destination country, had taken a decisive approach to countering human trafficking and had made progress in the areas of identification, protection and prevention. A special coordination commission had been established, and Turkey was working on a new national action plan against human trafficking. As the country hosting the largest refugee population, Turkey attached the utmost importance to protecting the rights and dignity of trafficking victims, migrants and refugees. The victims of human trafficking could benefit from support services in Turkey or return voluntarily to their own countries. Victims' needs were addressed in close cooperation with the International Organization for Migration.

75. Turkey was committed to combating terrorism and fought with the same determination against all terrorist organizations, including the Fethullah terrorist organization, the Kurdistan Workers' Party, the Democratic Union Party, the People's Protection Units and Daesh. A selective approach was unacceptable, and the international community should observe the universal principle of "extradite or prosecute".

76. Owing to its geographical location, Turkey was exposed to an extensive flow of illicit goods. The national drug control policy was based on countering domestic distribution networks, dismantling international drug trafficking networks and investigating the financing of terrorism through drug trafficking. The Ministry of Health was responsible for coordinating implementation of the national drug policy and action plan for the period 2018–2023. Turkey was contributing

to all bilateral and multilateral cooperation efforts to fight drug abuse and trafficking.

77. **Mr. Vaultier Mathias** (Portugal) said that the statement in paragraph 274 of the report of the Secretary-General on countering the use of information and communications technologies for criminal purposes (A/74/130) that “a new approach is needed” was related only to the lack of comprehensive international regulations allowing for the expeditious obtaining of digital evidence stored in other States. It was made clear in paragraph 275 that the loophole should be resolved in the framework of the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest Convention), which had more than 70 signatories. The parties to that Convention were already drafting a Second Protocol. Portugal had been a steadfast supporter of existing treaties and did not currently see the need for developing a new international instrument on that subject.

78. **Archbishop Auza** (Holy See) said that the rule of law enshrined the virtue of justice in human society and fortified the common good by ensuring the sovereignty of the law to the exclusion of arbitrary, corrupt or partial law. The rule of law should be advanced by society at large through united and coordinated efforts, and the international community should incorporate the recognition and protection of universal human rights in all efforts to prevent crime and respond to criminal activity. National responses to crime should be in line with universal human rights obligations. The Holy See welcomed the fact that broader rule of law issues would be central to the Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, to be held in Kyoto, Japan, in 2020.

79. Human trafficking was a global phenomenon that required increased mobilization and commitment from Governments, institutions and individuals, as the number of those enslaved continued to grow. In particular, greater resources were needed to protect and assist victims. Renewed determination was also needed to tackle the world drug problem, in view of the growing links between drug trafficking, corruption, criminal activity and even terrorism. At the same time, there was a shortage of internationally controlled substances made available for medical and scientific purposes. In closing, he reaffirmed the opposition of the Holy See to the legalization of drug use as a means of fighting addiction.

80. **Mr. Miko Nchama** (Equatorial Guinea) said that his country was extremely concerned by the growing impact of crime, violence and armed conflicts, which were often forcing entire families to migrate to unsafe locations. Cooperation among States must be strengthened to prevent crime and curb impunity.

Equatorial Guinea welcomed the work of the African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders in that regard.

81. Through its new economic and social development plan for the period up to 2035, the Government hoped to facilitate crime prevention and strengthen institutions. A national codification committee had been established to introduce reforms to bring the legal system into line with the requirements of modern and efficient contemporary justice and the fight against terrorism. The Government was also developing its cybersecurity infrastructure. ORTEL, a regulatory body for telecommunications, provided independent oversight of cybersecurity issues. Its main purposes were to provide legal advice, ensure consistency and compliance and propose institutional reforms to enhance telecommunications.

82. Equatorial Guinea was active in regional, subregional and international counter-terrorism efforts. It had ratified 11 of the 19 international legal instruments relating to terrorism, including the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. It had also adopted the Regulation relating to the Prevention and Suppression of Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism In Central Africa of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community and was a member of the Inter-Governmental Task Force against Money-Laundering in Central Africa.

83. Regarding the increase in the production, supply and use of drugs, Equatorial Guinea, which had a young population, was vulnerable owing to unresolved armed conflicts, transnational organized crime, armed groups and terrorism. In accordance with the African Union Plan of Action on Drug Control and the African common position presented at the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem in 2016, Equatorial Guinea believed that the main objective of national, regional and global drug policies should be to improve health, security and socioeconomic well-being.

84. **Ms. Cartwright** (Bahamas) said that her country had established or updated several bilateral and regional international cooperation agreements for mutual legal or judicial assistance in the control of drug trafficking and related crimes, including the mutual legal assistance treaties. Its national drug control plan for the period 2017–2021 incorporated the recommendations of the General Assembly included in the Hemispheric Plan of Action on Drugs of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission.

85. The Bahamas engaged in cross-border cooperation with law enforcement agencies in areas such as joint

operations, the exchange of liaison officers and the exchange of information. As criminal activity became more sophisticated, public safety officials must make use of cutting-edge technology. The Government had therefore acquired and was operating ShotSpotter, closed-circuit television, drones and body-worn cameras.

86. The Government was developing a method to quantify trafficking in persons in order to obtain data to improve its understanding of the problem. The Bahamas Department of Correctional Services had increased the number of participants in personal development and work release programmes as part of a broader strategy to equip inmates with the tools necessary to re-enter society while reducing the risk of reoffending.

87. The challenge of keeping a country safe was amplified by the immediate and long-term effects of climate change, as the Bahamas had recently experienced during the devastation wreaked by Hurricane Dorian. The Bahamas was grateful to all those who had assisted it in responding to the worst natural disaster in its recent history.

88. **Mr. Opimakh** (Belarus) said that Belarus welcomed the adoption of the resolution on the Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto and hoped that the review would be conducted as soon as possible. Transnational crime and its new, increasingly sophisticated forms, such as cybercrime, required the international community to take prompt and effective measures. In 2019, Belarus had been entrusted with chairing the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. Belarus welcomed the outcome of the twenty-eighth session of the Commission, in May 2019. The resolution on strengthening the engagement of all members of society in crime prevention, adopted at the initiative of Belarus, was the first resolution of the Commission on that subject.

89. Belarus welcomed the steps taken to counter the criminal misuse of information and communications technology. However, information and communications technology could and should be utilized to combat crime and terrorism. The outcome document of the international high-level conference on countering terrorism through innovative approaches and the use of new and emerging technologies, held on 3 and 4 September 2019 in Minsk, had opened new avenues for interregional cooperation in that regard. Modern technology should also be harnessed to ensure the cybersecurity of children and young people on the Internet, which was used to recruit young people for

drug trafficking. A drug control information strategy targeted at young people should be developed and promoted on the Internet and social media.

90. Belarus welcomed the outcomes of the ministerial segment of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, held in Vienna in March 2019, and its balanced 2019 Ministerial Declaration, which focused on addressing and countering the world drug problem. Belarus attached particular importance to achieving universal ratification of the three United Nations drug control conventions and their full implementation by States parties. The existing international legal and institutional framework for drug control served as an important basis for national efforts and international cooperation in that area and should not be dismantled, including on the pretext of “national specificities”.

91. Belarus took a principled position against the legalization of drugs and the lifting of bans on drug trafficking. Belarusian law enforcement agencies played an important role in combating drug trafficking, including by eliminating international drug flows through Belarus. The national drug control policy for the period 2014–2018 had helped to improve the drug situation in the country and to prevent large-scale drug use by young people.

92. **Mr. Penaranda** (Philippines) said that methamphetamine trade and use was increasing in South East Asia. Mindful of its obligations under international law, in particular human rights law, the Government of the Philippines was pursuing a campaign against illegal drugs in the context of its human rights-based development agenda. Since the launch of the campaign, 435,731 people had benefited from recovery and wellness programmes, and \$120 million had been invested in health services and rehabilitation.

93. Law enforcement activities were carried out in compliance with the law in the Philippines. Missteps, if committed, were addressed through functioning accountability mechanisms. The initial figures for alleged extrajudicial killings, which had been staggering and rightly worrying, had been shown to be severely exaggerated, if not baseless. Proprio motu investigations were conducted by the Government even in the absence of formal complaints. As at the second quarter of 2019, 4,583 such investigations had been conducted.

94. While recognizing the need to address new and evolving challenges in conformity with the three international drug control conventions, the Philippines reaffirmed that those conventions allowed States parties sufficient flexibility to design and implement national drug policies in accordance with their priorities and needs.

95. **Mr. Bessedik** (Algeria) said that the fight against transnational organized crime, in particular drug trafficking, could not be successful without the adoption of an inclusive approach based on economic and social development. The fight also required efficient international and regional cooperation with respect for the primordial principles of sovereignty, equality, political independence, territorial integrity and non-interference in internal affairs.

96. Trafficking in drugs, especially cannabis, represented a serious threat to the security and stability of North Africa. More than 52 tons of cannabis had been seized in Algeria in 2017, nearly 79 per cent of which came from the western border. The Algerian authorities were forced to mobilize considerable resources to counter cannabis trafficking. The Government of Algeria also mobilized all its institutions, including civil society, to make citizens, in particular young people, aware of the risks of drugs under its national strategy to combat drugs for the period 2018–2022, which was based on the pillars of prevention, treatment and repression.

97. The international community must confront terrorism, in particular its financing, resolutely, collectively and through a global approach. In North Africa, which was already unstable and insecure owing to persistent conflicts and multifaceted crises, the situation was exacerbated by the interconnections of terrorism with trafficking in drugs and firearms, the smuggling of migrants and human trafficking. Algeria remained mobilized in the international fight against terrorism. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy would not be complete without the conclusion of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

98. **Mr. Theim** (Myanmar) said that, as a party to the three main international drug control conventions, his country was working closely with the relevant United Nations agencies, organizations and stakeholders to address the drug problem. In implementation of the Doha Declaration on Integrating Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice into the Wider United Nations Agenda to Address Social and Economic Challenges and to Promote the Rule of Law at the National and International Levels, and Public Participation, Myanmar had drafted a national strategy on the prevention of crime in January 2019. Awareness-raising, preventive measures, law enforcement, continuous monitoring and evaluation, capacity-building, supervision and management were primary tasks in the prevention of crime at the national level. UNODC had helped to devise work plans in a number of areas, including

combating transnational crime syndicates, illicit trafficking and corruption.

99. The current five-year plan of action of Myanmar for combating trafficking in persons had been improved on the basis of lessons learned from previous plans, and was consistent with the plan of action of the Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative against Trafficking. The Government was currently reviewing the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Law of 2005 to improve the article on effective implementation of the criminal justice process. In addition to implementing regional initiatives, Myanmar was cooperating closely with its immediate neighbours to combat trafficking in persons under bilateral memorandums of understanding.

100. The Government was currently drafting a law on cybercrime and was engaging with INTERPOL and the Association of Heads of Police of ASEAN, among others, to address cybercrime. National cybersecurity laws should be aligned with international standards, and human rights aspects, such as the right to privacy and human rights online, should be incorporated into national cybersecurity legal frameworks for criminal investigations. His delegation supported the ongoing deliberations of the Expert Group to Conduct a Comprehensive Study on Cybercrime on the eventual adoption of a United Nations convention on the prevention of cybercrime.

101. Myanmar condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. The National Risk Assessment of Money-Laundering and Terrorist Financing Committee had been formed in December 2015. To address the increasing drug problem, the President was personally initiating measures in the areas of prevention, law enforcement and treatment, and a new drug control policy had been adopted in 2017.

102. **Mr. Dinh Nho Hung** (Viet Nam) said that, despite the efforts made and progress achieved in the 110 years since the meeting of the Shanghai Opium Commission, the world continued to face an ever-worsening drug problem that was undermining progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Amphetamine-type stimulants and new psychoactive substances had been threatening the security, health and welfare of people, especially young people. The drug problem was also a breeding ground for other crimes, such as financing of terrorism and money-laundering. The alarming situation required efforts to be strengthened nationally, regionally and globally.

103. Recognizing the multidimensional nature of the drug problem, the Government of Viet Nam had developed a national strategy on preventing and countering drugs and had taken steps to eradicate illicit

cultivation and prevent the abuse of narcotics and psychoactive substances and the diversion of precursors. For drug addicts, treatment methods had been diversified, and access to education, vocational training and support for employment had been provided to facilitate their reintegration. Operations had been launched on key routes to deter and arrest criminals.

104. Viet Nam was working closely with ASEAN member States to achieve the goal of a drug-free ASEAN community. Through the implementation of the work plan on securing communities against illicit drugs, ASEAN promoted collective action among member States in areas such as prevention, treatment and rehabilitation, and enforcement. In September 2019, Viet Nam had hosted a ministerial meeting on enhancing cooperation in combating transnational drug crime, with participants from ASEAN member States, Australia, the United States of America and UNODC. The three United Nations drug control conventions were the fundamental documents for addressing the world drug problem. Viet Nam respected the sovereign right of each State and the particularities of each country and region.

105. **Ms. Tripathi** (India) said that the relationship between transnational organized crime and terrorism was symbiotic, with terrorist organizations increasingly using transnational organized criminal networks for illicit activities to raise funds. The situation required a far more coherent and resolute response. The United Nations needed to increase cooperation with bodies such as the Financial Action Task Force. The structure of organized crime groups was shifting towards more loosely associated networks that were difficult to interdict, and they were using new and emerging technologies, including drones, virtual currencies, encrypted communications and artificial intelligence. The timely sharing of operational information among law enforcement agencies across jurisdictions and borders was therefore required.

106. Broader international cooperation based on criminal justice and health responses was needed to tackle the drug problem. A balanced approach was also needed to address the misuse of prescription drugs while guaranteeing the availability of and access to such medicines. The Government of India had launched a national action plan for drug demand reduction by 2023, focusing on preventive education, awareness-raising, capacity-building, counselling, treatment and rehabilitation. Stronger partnerships with civil society and the private sector and more resources for law enforcement were needed to address the use of the Internet and social media by traffickers.

107. India had adopted a multipronged, multi-stakeholder approach towards the prevention and timely investigation of crimes of human trafficking. Capacity-building of law enforcement agencies and the judiciary had been accorded high priority. A comprehensive programme was in place to facilitate the rescue, rehabilitation and reintegration of victims and the repatriation of cross-border victims to their countries of origin.

108. Legal provisions were in place in India to address cybercrime. Dedicated cells for reporting and investigation and cyberforensic labs for the training of law enforcement bodies and the judiciary had been established. Greater multilateral cooperation was needed in the field of cybercrime, in particular to facilitate swift information exchange, which was essential for furnishing digital evidence in cybercrime investigations.

109. **Mr. Lim** (Singapore), speaking under agenda item 107, said that while there were many laws to ensure the safety of the physical world, there were far fewer regulations for cyberspace. Internet users risked losing their privacy and personal data owing to cybercrime. Singapore had taken steps to combat cybercrime, including strengthening international partnerships, developing its cybersecurity ecosystem and enhancing preventive education, in line with its national cybercrime action plan.

110. As the ASEAN Voluntary Lead Shepherd on Cybercrime, Singapore had spearheaded the establishment of an ASEAN cybercapability desk at the INTERPOL Global Complex for Innovation, which would contribute to enhancing the region's ability to combat cybercrime. Singapore would also launch an ASEAN-Singapore cybersecurity centre of excellence in order to support the development of cyberstrategies by ASEAN member States, increase the technical expertise of the computer emergency response teams of member States and promote information-sharing.

111. Since the call for innovation from industry initiated by Singapore in 2018, more than 70 proposals for cybersecurity solutions had been received from industry experts. A Government-run programme was providing advice and cybersecurity solution subsidies to growing enterprises. Students in Singapore were taught how to protect themselves from cybercrime and related threats through education initiatives, such as the national cybersecurity awareness campaign.

112. **Ms. Tang** (Singapore), speaking under agenda item 108, said that record quantities of methamphetamine had been seized in East and South East Asia in 2017. Methamphetamine was the most commonly abused drug

in Singapore, and close to two thirds of new abusers in 2018 had been under 30 years of age. Singapore was firmly committed to a harm prevention approach to tackle the drug problem. While drugs – namely, opium – had once been legal in Singapore, wreaking enormous social cost and harm to addicts and their families, the drug situation was currently under control, with abusers comprising less than 0.1 per cent of the population. In addition to tough laws, preventive education and rehabilitation were equally crucial pillars of the harm prevention approach.

113. To connect with young people, Singapore had made use of comics and interactive card games with anti-drug messages, targeted anti-drug social media campaigns and augmented reality exhibitions. A national survey had found that more than 90 per cent of youth respondents who had discussed drugs with their parents had been deterred from abusing drugs. The Government therefore provided toolkits to help parents to begin those discussions. The Government had also worked closely with religious and community organizations to design culturally nuanced and community-centred anti-drug campaigns. In September 2019, Singapore had organized a joint training programme on drug prevention in education settings with UNODC.

114. Drug abusers in Singapore were offered intensive rehabilitation programmes, skills training opportunities and job matching. The Government ensured that drug abusers received sustained support for their reintegration by providing structured community supervision programmes for up to five years. The results of such efforts had been encouraging. The two-year recidivism rate had dropped from more than 70 per cent in the 1990s to 24 per cent in the past few years. Given that each country's drug problem was unique to its national circumstances, States must exercise their sovereign right to implement the drug control policies most appropriate to their specific situations.

115. **Mr. Mabhongo** (South Africa) said that her Government remained focused on targeting organized crime and its link to the erosion of the environment and wildlife. The illegal killing of rhinos and the illegal trade in rhino horn had been declared priority crimes in South Africa, and a committee had been established to focus on rhino poaching and wildlife trafficking. The Government had increased its efforts to curb wildlife crime through the Barcode of Wildlife project, which had led to the development of the first DNA wildlife barcode reference library.

116. Given the increased incidence and complexity of cyberattacks, the international community needed to

develop and adopt, under the auspices of the United Nations, an international instrument on cybercrime that drew on existing regional instruments on cybercrime and provided a basis for norms, standards and agreements on good conduct in cyberrelations and combating cybercrime. In that regard, South Africa welcomed the work of the Expert Group to Conduct a Comprehensive Study on Cybercrime and looked forward to the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on Advancing Responsible State Behaviour in Cyberspace in the Context of International Security and the Open-ended Working Group on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security.

117. The commitment of the Government to addressing corruption was reflected in the medium-term strategic framework, the national development plan and the national security strategy. Illegal mining and trafficking in precious metals were complex crimes that had interlinkages with other forms of organized crime. At the twenty-eighth session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, in May 2019, South Africa and Peru had introduced a resolution on combating transnational organized crime and its links to illicit trafficking in precious metals and illegal mining, including by enhancing the security of supply chains of precious metals, which had subsequently been adopted by the Economic and Social Council in July 2019.

118. South Africa commended UNODC for supporting Member States in building the capacities of their criminal justice, border control and law enforcement systems to more effectively address challenges relating to terrorism. South Africa welcomed the signing of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact.

119. **Mr. Al Khalil** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his country was a party to most of the international conventions addressing transnational organized crime. His Government was committed to modernizing national legislation and applying it in a manner consistent with international conventions. In recent years, the Government had adopted a series of Acts to combat crimes such as money-laundering, the financing of terrorism, kidnapping, cybercrime, drug trafficking and illegal migration. It was collaborating closely with UNODC and welcomed the Office's efforts to provide technical assistance to Member States. UNODC should do more to identify the root causes of crime and find solutions for the affected countries, while providing support and technical assistance to the countries affected.

120. The Syrian Arab Republic had previously been considered as free from the crimes of trafficking in persons, trafficking in human organs and transnational organized crime. However, the situation had changed in recent years, and many terrorist elements from all over the world had entered Syria. Savage terrorist groups, including Daesh, Al-Qaida, the Nusrah Front and associated terrorist groups, were supported by regional and international actors that provided them with money, weapons, ammunition and modern communications technologies. Those groups had committed all kinds of terrorist crimes, including human trafficking, trafficking in human organs, sexual exploitation, and the destruction or pillage of Syrian cultural heritage. The increase in terrorist crime had forced many Syrians to leave the country, which had led to a corresponding increase in human trafficking and other organized crime that targeted Syrian migrants, especially children. An action plan to protect them was urgently needed. Criminal and terrorist elements were using modern communications technologies to increase and expand their crimes and to commit cybercrime, which was no less dangerous. Member States should step up their efforts to address that challenge.

121. It was vital to strengthen the role of the United Nations in addressing transnational organized crime in all its forms. Members of the international community must shoulder their responsibilities and participate in international cooperation efforts, while demonstrating the necessary political will to implement all the relevant international conventions and resolutions in order to combat transnational organized crime, fight terrorism and extremist ideologies and root out their sources of funding.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.