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Chair: Mr. Marschik (Austria)

Contents

Agenda item 107: Crime prevention and criminal justice (*continued*)

Agenda item 108: Countering the use of information and communications technologies for criminal purposes (*continued*)

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Agenda item 107: Crime prevention and criminal justice (*continued*) (A/78/119, A/78/159, A/78/264)

Agenda item 108: Countering the use of information and communications technologies for criminal purposes (*continued*)

1. **Mr. Wald** (Luxembourg), speaking as a youth delegate, said that the twenty-first century was an era of new technology and innovation. Digitalization had paved the way for remarkable opportunities and made the world more interconnected than ever before, while the development of social media and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence had revolutionized economies and societies. Such advances were celebrated, but it was also important to recognize the challenges they entailed.

2. Digitalization had been a priority for the Government of Luxembourg for a number of years, and there were measures and initiatives in place in schools, but a truly digital environment was still some way off. When consulted, young people in Luxembourg had identified digital literacy and the responsible use of the Internet as key themes. They had also expressed concern about online harassment, an increase in misinformation and digital addiction, all of which had an impact on their physical and mental health. Stakeholders had a collective responsibility to guard against abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence to ensure that children were protected both online and offline and that they had access to reliable information.

3. Artificial intelligence had potential, but partial or incomplete data could lead to problems. Effective regulation should be coupled with strong data protection systems based on democratic principles and human rights rather than the preferences of large companies. Urgent action was necessary, as legislators were struggling to keep pace with technological innovations. However, by rushing to introduce regulations, lawmakers ran the risk of creating loopholes and inconsistencies.

4. Luxembourg urged the international community to act together to bolster digital literacy and education systems and protect young people from harm. Common rules for the entire digital world were needed, as were efforts to regulate artificial intelligence on the basis of human rights and with consideration for marginalized and vulnerable communities.

5. **Mr. Zavala Porras** (Costa Rica) said that factors such as socioeconomic crises, mounting inequality and poverty, climate change and emerging digital

technologies were hindering the prevention of crime, including transnational organized crime, which was on the rise in 2023.

6. Around the world, 83 per cent of people lived in locations with high crime rates. Conflict tended to lead to increased criminality, but crimes such as human trafficking and interpersonal violence were disproportionately prevalent even in countries at peace. For example, the trade in illegal weapons exacerbated violence and insecurity in Central America despite originating in the northern hemisphere. The situation had an adverse impact on individuals and also on institutions and States' ability to address the issue.

7. It was a cause of great concern to note from the report that State participation continued to be the most common driving force behind organized crime. It was therefore vital to work with States to combat organized crime rings and to strengthen civil society as the ultimate bulwark against authoritarianism, distrust and the erosion of the social fabric.

8. The response to crime should be based on increased democracy, strengthening of the rule of law and independent, transparent, swift and comprehensive justice. As a member of the Justice Action Coalition, Costa Rica called for the prioritization of justice at the community level, as well as for the inclusion of the perspective of LGBTIQI+ persons. The introduction of A New Agenda for Peace was an invaluable opportunity to improve inter-agency coordination at the global and local level and to make international cooperation and prevention efforts more efficient. Coordination with civil society, journalists and other human rights defenders was key to the early prevention and detection of human rights abuses.

9. Costa Rica welcomed the agenda proposed by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice for the Congress to be held in 2026, which focused on people-centred justice and strategies to prevent violence and insecurity online. Having recently suffered a cyberattack, Costa Rica believed that there was an urgent need for the international community to address that challenge.

10. **Ms. Pella** (Indonesia) said that challenges related to crime prevention, criminal justice and the misuse of information and communications technology were deeply entwined issues. They affected not only individual nations but also the global community at large, hindering efforts to fulfil the Sustainable Development Goals. Indonesia had therefore embarked on a whole-of-government strategy to provide a comprehensive and efficient response.

11. An inclusive and equitable justice system formed the bedrock of a strong nation. Indonesia had therefore established legal aid programmes nationwide, with an emphasis on community-based mediation and training of community leaders to serve as paralegals. Almost 60 per cent of provinces had regulations safeguarding funding for legal aid to ensure access to justice for all.

12. Indonesia had made it a priority to strengthen cybersecurity regulations in order to stay one step ahead of emerging challenges. Recognizing that digitalization could be a dual-edged sword, Indonesia had introduced a data protection law in September 2022 and established cybersecurity regulations specifically tailored to the finance sector. Such efforts demonstrated the country's commitment to ensuring that its digital transformation remained secure, transparent and aligned with the best interests of its people and economy.

13. The international community should remain steadfast in countering illegal drugs and the threat they posed to future generations. Indonesia had taken robust measures in that regard, geared towards both prevention and enforcement. Human rights should remain central in the fight against drugs so that those affected benefited from rehabilitation and reintegration measures while perpetrators were held accountable by the legal system.

14. Active involvement in numerous international forums emphasized his country's determination to foster greater global collaboration with the goal of achieving a society free of drugs. That aim would also serve as a guide during Indonesia's term in the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (2024–2027).

15. **Ms. Cedano** (Dominican Republic) said that organized crime, drug trafficking, human trafficking and corruption were challenges that transcended borders and affected every aspect of people's lives. In working towards their eradication, independent justice systems had a fundamental role to play in promoting fairness, human rights and transparency so that perpetrators could not act with impunity. It was important to strengthen cooperation among countries, share information effectively and focus on prevention, by addressing root causes such as poverty, inequality and a lack of opportunity.

16. Corruption represented a major threat to the rule of law and social and economic stability in that it reduced trust in institutions, sapped public resources and perpetuated inequality. Combating corruption would entail strengthening institutions, transparency and accountability at every level, including by protecting whistle-blowers, ensuring the independence of the judiciary and applying the law effectively.

17. In recent years, the Dominican Republic had endeavoured to ensure transparency and independence in the fight against corruption and drug trafficking in the country, establishing institutions to investigate criminal networks rather than individual cases. Emerging crimes, such as cybercrime, should be addressed in a timely manner, and there was an urgent need to establish a new international framework to tackle online criminality, based on the principles of transparency and impartiality. With regard to human trafficking, the Dominican Republic had redoubled its efforts to address the causes and risk factors, with an emphasis on institutional transparency and responsibility and the centrality of victims.

18. Aware that crime caused human suffering and impeded progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, the Dominican Republic reaffirmed its commitment to the Kyoto Declaration on Advancing Crime Prevention, Criminal Justice and the Rule of Law: Towards the Achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

19. **Mr. Anyanah** (Ghana) said that information and communications technology (ICT) could transform societies, stimulate jobs, improve productivity and accelerate inclusive growth for sustainable development. In the wrong hands, however, ICT had been used to exploit women and children online, recruit young people into extremism and terrorist networks, propagate hate speech and destabilize individuals, economies and nations. It was therefore vital to facilitate the orderly growth and development of ICT and to leverage the tools available at the national, regional and international levels.

20. Existing global and regional instruments and initiatives, such as the Convention against Corruption, the Road Map for Digital Cooperation and the Convention on Cybercrime, remained essential, and his delegation welcomed General Assembly resolution [74/247](#), in which the Assembly decided to establish a committee to elaborate a new convention on the topic.

21. As the Secretary General had set out in *A New Agenda for Peace*, it was important to develop governance frameworks, multilateral accountability mechanisms and regulations to address the risks and challenges posed by digital technologies in the context of peace and security. Ghana saw value in enhancing partnerships through regional instruments, which provided region-specific remedies to complement global efforts.

22. It was essential to mainstream gender into national ICT strategies and develop policies to empower women

and young people with the skills they needed to become effective stakeholders in developing national ICT resilience. The private sector and technology giants in particular could be encouraged to take a greater role.

23. Given the surge in Internet penetration between 2012 and 2022, the Government of Ghana was determined to make cyberspace safe. It had integrated cybersecurity into national strategies and had initiatives in place to enhance the ICT skills of women and young people. Furthermore, October had been declared national cybersecurity awareness month in order to raise awareness of online threats and deterrence measures.

24. The commitment of Member States to fulfilling their obligations with respect to global and regional instruments, coupled with support from the relevant bodies to enhance capacity-building, was an effective way to prevent cyberspace being used for criminal purposes.

25. Turning to the agenda item on crime prevention and criminal justice, the speaker said that the increasing incidence of crime remained a cause for concern. Urgent efforts should therefore be made to enhance the rule of law, human rights and socioeconomic development. Moreover, the international community should support national efforts to address related challenges such as funding, human resource and capacity gaps, especially in developing countries, and in some cases the absence of appropriate policies.

26. Multilateral instruments such as the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime provided a useful framework to support the efforts of individual Member States. While it was important for Member States to honour their international obligations, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) had a critical role to play. Ghana also called for the implementation of the recommendations set out in the Kyoto Declaration on Advancing Crime Prevention, Criminal Justice and the Rule of Law.

27. As regards measures to close capacity gaps in developing countries, Ghana welcomed the increase in funding from donor partners and called for support for UNODC and other stakeholders to be sustained. States should prioritize the implementation of regional instruments to prevent crime and support criminal justice, and Ghana welcomed the progress made in that regard.

28. Ghana encouraged the adoption of measures to address the root causes of crime, including policies to resolve governance and development deficits. Efforts

should also be made to integrate gender perspectives into crime prevention policies and to create an environment that empowered women and young people to become agents of change.

29. At the national level, the Government remained resolute in its commitment to combat crime and enhance the administration of justice by re-tooling law enforcement agencies and pursuing judicial reforms and improvements. One such programme sought to ensure fair and timely justice for all Ghanaian citizens and had already helped to reduce Ghana's remand prisoner population substantially.

30. **Monsignor Murphy** (Observer for the Holy See) said that, during times of crises and emergencies, there were attempts to undermine the rule of law in a misguided effort to find easy and immediate solutions. However, there could be no exceptions to the rule of law and the observance of due process, as they were vital for the protection of human dignity, which should be placed at the core of all efforts to improve criminal justice. True justice meant not simply punishing criminals, but doing everything possible to reform, improve and educate the person. While lawful public authorities had the right to inflict proportionate punishments, they must apply only those measures that protect the common good and respect God-given human dignity, even after the commission of the most serious crimes.

31. The Holy See considered the death penalty inadmissible because it was an attack on the inviolability and dignity of the person. The Holy See welcomed the development of more effective detention systems that ensured due protection of citizens but did not deprive the guilty of the possibility of redemption.

32. The conditions endured by inmates within many criminal justice systems reflected a throwaway culture in which inmates were simply discarded and expelled from society. In offering inhuman conditions, the criminal justice system was failing to promote true social reintegration, which began with guaranteeing opportunities for integral human development, including through pastoral care, education and health care. The imprisoned were serving a sentence for their crimes, but for the punishment to be fruitful, there must be a horizon of hope. In parallel, broader society should not stigmatize those who had already served their sentences or subject them to a new social punishment with rejection and indifference.

33. Turning to agenda item 108, he said that the rapid and overall positive development of ICT in recent years offered new possibilities, but the criminal use of ICT might hinder the attainment of integral human development, threaten international peace and security,

and violate human dignity and rights. New forms of crime must be addressed, but it was also important to wrestle with conventional crimes being committed online.

34. The Holy See condemned the production, distribution and use of child pornography, which had been facilitated and accelerated by ICT. While its first concern was for children who had been victimized, it was alarmed that generative software was being used to simulate images of child sex abuse, further driving demand. There had also been a dramatic growth in adult pornography in the digital world, which was increasingly accessible to children. Pope Francis had therefore urged those involved, including companies operating in the sector, to assume their responsibility towards minors.

35. The Holy See was also concerned about the use of ICT by human traffickers to profile, recruit, control and exploit their victims, as well as to launder their ill-gotten profits. A proportional response to that complex issue should emphasize assisting and protecting victims. The potential of artificial intelligence would only be realized if there was a constant and consistent commitment on the part of those developing the technologies to act ethically and responsibly. In that regard, the Holy See welcomed the efforts of international organizations to regulate such technology. Scientific and technological progress must serve the dignity of the person.

36. **Ms. González** (Uruguay) said that agenda item 108 was of great importance to her country, as reflected in its national policies and participation in international forums covering technology, and cyberspace in particular. The exponential growth of connectivity and ICT had opened up a new front in the fight against crime, necessitating coordinated action at a global level. Uruguay was closely monitoring efforts to achieve an appropriate governance framework and believed it was vital to make further progress towards an international convention on countering the use of information and communications technologies for criminal purposes.

37. Uruguay welcomed the work of the Commission on the Status of Women regarding innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. The latter suffered harm when intimate material was shared without their consent, and Member States should continue to make such acts a criminal offence.

38. The proliferation of child pornography online and the artificial intelligence algorithms that reinforced discrimination on social media threatened to shatter children's innocence. Under article 19 of the

Convention on the Rights of the Child, States parties had a responsibility to take all appropriate measures to protect children from violence, injury or abuse, including sexual abuse. At the national level, it was important to ensure that individual officials had the necessary qualifications and tools to identify, prosecute and judge crimes committed in the digital world.

39. There was an urgent need to combat cybercrime, but such efforts must be rooted in respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and data privacy. Uruguay had implemented a digital citizenship strategy to ensure citizens were able to understand and exercise their digital rights in full knowledge of the bodies and mechanisms in place for their protection.

40. **Ms. Pichardo Urbina** (Nicaragua) said that Nicaragua was a party to the three main drug control conventions and was committed to international cooperation towards an integrated and balanced strategy to counter the world drug problem. Such cooperation should be based on the Charter of the United Nations, international law and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as respect for State sovereignty and territorial integrity, the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of States, human rights, fundamental freedoms, human dignity and the principles of equal rights and mutual respect among States.

41. Nicaragua had a person-centred strategy to counter drug abuse, which it implemented on a daily basis through policies and measures for treatment and prevention with regard to young people and for tackling the national and international drug trade.

42. Human trafficking was a serious problem that required a collective international response, and States should develop and apply effective measures to prevent, combat and eliminate human trafficking, eradicate demand and protect victims. The international community needed to redouble its efforts in that regard, promoting international solidarity and robust multilateralism. Nicaragua had approved a law against human trafficking in 2015.

43. With respect to the drafting of the future comprehensive international convention on countering the use of information and communications technologies for criminal purposes, it was vital to provide developing countries with the cooperation, capacity-building and technical assistance needed to implement plans and programmes to combat cybercrime. Nicaragua had a law in place to prevent, investigate, prosecute and punish crimes committed using ICT. All Nicaraguans were therefore afforded protection and security through the automated services

provided by State institutions, with a view to protecting human dignity.

44. **Ms. Bouchikhi** (Morocco) said that her country was addressing corruption by criminalizing it in all its forms and imposing severe punishments on perpetrators. As a signatory to the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption, Morocco had launched a national anti-corruption strategy and completed 70 per cent of the projects set out therein. The strategy relied upon four main actors – the State and the political system, civil society, the business community and the media – and was intended to improve services provided to citizens, digitalize administrative services, make information more transparent and accessible and enhance monitoring and accountability.

45. Preventing the abuse of drugs and psychotropic substances at the national and international level was a central priority. Morocco was committed to implementing an integrated and comprehensive national strategy with three goals: reducing supply, reducing demand and the development of alternatives. Between 2018 and 2022, Moroccan authorities had seized 1,656 tons of cannabis, 5 tons of cocaine and almost 53,000 psychotropic pills.

46. Morocco had a national, multi-sector control and prevention strategy for non-communicable diseases aimed at monitoring the health implications of drug use and the means to address it and promoting health-based approaches to assist those suffering from addiction. In that regard, Morocco welcomed the launch of the Global Coalition to Address Synthetic Drug Threats and reiterated its commitment to working with all co-sponsors.

47. Morocco had introduced a number of national initiatives to combat human trafficking and was currently working to protect victims by setting up a national database.

48. Turning to agenda item 108, she said that Africa had more Internet users than North America, South America or the Middle East in 2022 and that Internet penetration in Morocco stood at 84.1 per cent. There was a national strategy to combat cybercrime, the five main pillars of which were strengthening legal provisions, securing electronic services, protecting personal data, safeguarding the ICT systems of national departments and institutions and combating cybercriminals. It had also promulgated robust national laws in line with its international commitments. Morocco was a party to the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime, had been one of the first African signatories to its Second Additional Protocol on

enhanced cooperation and disclosure of electronic evidence, and was a party to the African Union Convention on Cyber Security and Personal Data Protection.

49. Her delegation welcomed the UNODC initiatives and activities, stressing that international cooperation was key to efforts to combat organized crime in all its forms. All common action in that regard should be based on the principle of regional and international responsibility, grounded in a shared, realistic and constructive vision and divorced from any overly ideological or political approach.

50. **Mr. Ono** (Japan) said that the rule of law was the foundation for promoting good governance and sustainable development while ensuring no one was left behind. With that in mind, Japan actively participated in discussions on crime prevention and criminal justice in subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council, through substantial and positive contributions to the establishment of the rule of law in the international community.

51. Sharing core values had become increasingly significant in recent times, especially in light of events such as the Russian aggression against Ukraine. In that vein, Japan had hosted the “Justice Affairs Diplomacy” Ministerial Forum in July 2023, where justice ministers from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Group of Seven were able to reaffirm core principles and discuss collaborative initiatives in the realm of law and justice. Japan remained committed to furthering the rule of law in partnership with the various stakeholders, in accordance with the principles outlined in the Kyoto Declaration on Advancing Crime Prevention, Criminal Justice and the Rule of Law: Towards the Achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

52. The challenge of international drug control had become more complex in recent years, amid an uptick in the unlawful production, distribution and non-prescribed use of synthetic drugs. The international community had to counter emerging threats such as the heightened risk of a surge in drug trafficking caused by increased international travel, a rapid expansion of the online drug trafficking market, and increasingly sophisticated drug supply channels. In close coordination with international organizations such as UNODC, Japan had actively supported countries that played key roles in the area of drug control through capacity-building and facilitating networking among law enforcement authorities. It hoped to further contribute to international drug control, while acknowledging the proper use of controlled substances for medical purposes. His country was also engaging in

capacity-building programmes to counter cybercrime and participating in the discussions of the Ad Hoc Committee to Elaborate a Comprehensive International Convention on Countering the Use of Information and Communications Technologies for Criminal Purposes.

53. **Ms. Lortkipanidze** (Georgia) said that crime prevention, a fair and independent judiciary, the rule of law and good governance were key to democratic and sustainable development. Georgia was committed to implementing further criminal justice reforms and contributing to collective efforts to promote and protect human rights.

54. Georgia valued its fruitful cooperation with UNODC and was helping to finalize a draft road map for cooperation in the 2023–2025 period. Moreover, the relevant governmental agencies in Georgia were in the process of submitting the annual report questionnaires to the Office.

55. Combating human trafficking was a priority for the Government of Georgia, which was committed to taking efficient measures to enhance prevention, protection, prosecution and partnership. According to the United States State Department reports on trafficking in persons, Georgia had been upgraded to Tier 1 in 2016, confirming that Georgia endeavoured to effectively combat human trafficking and promote efficient and prompt protective services for victims.

56. Georgia was currently participating in the review of the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption and had completed the self-assessment checklist prepared by the UNODC secretariat. The Georgian Parliament had adopted new legislation in 2022 to establish an anti-corruption bureau responsible for developing anti-corruption policies and monitoring their implementation.

57. Georgia continued to actively implement its human-centred, liberalized drug policy. In 2023, its interagency coordinating council had adopted a 2023–2030 national drug strategy and 2023–2024 action plan, which set out short- and long-term goals supported by balanced, human-centred and evidence-based approaches. Georgia was also committed to honouring its obligations under the international drug control conventions, the outcome document of the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem and the principles of the EU Drugs Strategy 2021–2025.

58. **Mr. Tun** (Myanmar) said that Myanmar, cognizant of the threat of being at the centre of illicit drug trafficking, had strengthened collaboration with UNODC, civil society organizations, development

partners and other United Nations agencies. Starting with the signing of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, various initiatives had been taken, such as prohibiting opium sales, receiving multi-agency missions to review progress in drug abuse control, developing master plans and signing a memorandum of understanding on drug control with neighbouring countries.

59. While opium cultivation had fallen since 2014, the illegal military coup in 2021 had led to 33 per cent growth in opium cultivation, a twofold increase in opium production and a rise in methamphetamine production and trafficking across the border. That had triggered both a revolt against the military junta and challenges to global security in the face of rising cross-border human trafficking and cyber scams. Myanmar had become a destination for transnational organized crime for the first time in history, and the military dictatorship had turned the country into a major exporter of crime and instability. The only way to stop those trends was to put an end to the military junta and set up a civilian federal democratic government that respected the rule of law.

60. Against that backdrop, the National Unity Government of Myanmar considered drug abuse prevention and control as a core obligation and had set up a central committee to prevent the threats posed by narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. His delegation called on the international community to extend its support to Myanmar not only in combating the scourge of drugs but also in ending the military dictatorship and restoring democracy.

61. **Mr. Hassani** (Algeria) said that interconnected forms of crime required strengthened international cooperation, in particularly to address the root causes and ensure equal justice for all. In May 2023 Algeria had passed a law to prevent and combat human trafficking by reinforcing access to justice pursuant to international law. In July 2023 it had launched a national strategy for transparency and combating corruption, as defined by the anti-corruption authority created under the Constitution. Concerned about the threat posed by ICT in spreading terrorism and misinformation, Algeria welcomed the progress made under its leadership of the Ad Hoc Committee to Elaborate a Comprehensive International Convention on Countering the Use of Information and Communications Technologies for Criminal Purposes.

62. With 39.5 million people around the world suffering from drug use disorders, drug use was impeding social and economic development, and threatening stability and people's physical and mental

health. To address those challenges and threats, it was essential to implement the three United Nations drug control conventions as well as various political documents, including the 2019 Ministerial Declaration on Strengthening Our Actions at the National, Regional and International Levels to Accelerate the Implementation of Our Joint Commitments to Address and Counter the World Drug Problem,

63. At the national level, strengthened law enforcement capacity had led to positive results, notably the seizure of 58 tons of cannabis in 2022 and more than 22 tons in the first six months of 2023. A law was also passed in 2023 to prevent illicit drug use and trafficking, which strengthened prevention and ensured inclusiveness by giving civil society a voice in defining national strategies. Algeria commended UNODC cooperation, in particular the Youth 4 Impact programme, and reiterated its resolve to meet its commitments and engage in multilateralism to tackle organized crime.

64. **Mr. Yajah** (Sierra Leone) said that ICT constituted the biggest revolution ever seen by the human race. Despite the initial promise of digital platforms as ways to connect, malicious cyber activity was invading people's privacy, exploiting their data, fuelling conflict, threatening democracy and human rights, and spreading disinformation and hate across the globe. One glaring example in Sierra Leone were the deaths in August 2022 of 27 people, including 7 police officers, which were attributed to the negative use of technology to spread hate speech and incite violence.

65. Effective and appropriate countermeasures were needed to combat those threats and keep online activities secure. Cybercrimes were often committed from countries lacking the required legal frameworks and, accordingly, cybersecurity knowledge and infrastructure should be strengthened in developing countries and in countries struggling with combating such crimes. Increased international cooperation could substantially minimize those crimes.

66. The Government understood the risks that cybercrime posed to the world and to Sierra Leone in particular, and it had launched preventative and criminal justice initiatives to counter the use of ICT for criminal purposes, which included defining a national innovative and digital strategy, adopting a national cybersecurity and data protection policy and setting up institutions to enhance resilience towards and mitigate some of the threats faced in cyberspace.

67. In 2021, Sierra Leone had passed a law to prevent the abusive use of computers and facilitate the timely and effective collection of electronic evidence for

cybercrime investigation and prosecution. With the overarching goal of bringing perpetrators to justice, the law also promoted critical national information infrastructure, fostered cybersecurity and protected computer programs, intellectual property and privacy rights.

68. Sierra Leone remained committed to the United Nations conventions to effectively prevent and combat crimes. Collective defence and resolve were needed to counter such threats and reduce the capabilities of malicious actors and address the root causes of such vulnerabilities.

69. **Mr. Poveda Brito** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that Venezuela remained committed to preventing and combating crime in all its forms. It actively cooperated with authorities throughout the world and called for bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation frameworks to be strengthened and kept free from political interference. In accordance with resolution [75/282](#), Venezuela supported the prompt completion of negotiations to reach consensus on a convention to counter cybercrime.

70. Venezuela continued to combat large-scale corruption and was making preparations to participate in the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption. Only a truly multilateral and inclusive approach could effectively combat corruption; Venezuela rejected any unilateral attempt to evaluate other States' performance.

71. Progress in relation to crimes against migrants and human trafficking networks would only be made through cooperation between equals, dialogue and the non-politicization of those crimes, which would include putting an end to the use of the United Nations specialized agencies for advancing hidden agendas.

72. Venezuela denounced unilateral coercive measures that ran counter to the law and imposed hegemonic viewpoints for political control. A multilateral, cooperative approach based on the Charter of the United Nations was the only avenue for progress.

73. **Ms. Gebrekidan** (Eritrea) said that Eritrea, since its independence, had placed an effective criminal justice system at the core of its nation-building agenda. It had implemented measures to increase access to the justice system by expanding community courts and reviewing customary courts. The work of the prison system was based on not only correction but rehabilitation, and formal and vocational training for inmates was delivered at those facilities.

74. Affected by transnational crime, especially human trafficking, Eritrea had legal and institutional

frameworks in place to combat it. It also collaborated with transit and destination countries as well as regional and international bodies to address smuggling and human trafficking. It would continue to participate actively in existing regional bodies and emphasised the importance of development, economic opportunities and education in addressing the root causes of trafficking.

75. Anonymity in ICT facilitated trafficking, while the deletion and concealment of electronic evidence was growing increasingly easier. International and cross-border cooperation was critical to preserving evidence in a timely manner and to preventing criminal actions. UNODC and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children remained important legal frameworks to address the scourge of human trafficking.

76. Losses due to ICT-related crime ran into the trillions, but the effect on victims was incalculable in monetary terms. Eritrea welcomed inter-governmental negotiations under the auspices of the Ad Hoc Committee to elaborate a convention against cybercrime, which should be guided by resolutions [74/247](#) and [75/282](#). Her delegation was confident that they would complete their work on a comprehensive convention with measures that met the expectations of many delegations.

77. **Mr. Aydil** (Türkiye) said that Türkiye was fully committed to strengthening international cooperation in combating the use of ICT for criminal purposes. It was also determined to continue the fight against all terrorist organizations, including Da'esh, the Kurdistan Workers' Party/Partiya Yekitiya Demokrat/People's Protection Units (PKK/PYD/YPG) and the Fetullah Gülen Terrorist Organization. Those organizations financed their activities mostly through organized crime.

78. The heinous attack in Ankara on the previous day was a further example of the continuing threat of terrorism and the need for international solidarity. International cooperation was key to bringing terrorists to justice, and compliance with the principle of "extradite or prosecute" was crucial.

79. Concerned about the use of ICT for criminal offences, his delegation emphasised that the future convention on countering the use of information and communications technologies for criminal purposes should encompass terrorism-related crimes, and also hate speech and incitement to violence through ICT. Countries were encouraged to address the issue through existing mechanisms and initiatives, especially the Summit of the Future leading to the global digital compact.

80. In its efforts to eliminate human trafficking, Türkiye stood resolute and had strengthened identification, protection and prevention measures through a national action plan against human trafficking.

81. **Mr. Altarsha** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that the Syrian Arab Republic was a party to most international instruments addressing drug trafficking and countering the use of drugs for non-medicinal purposes. The Government was combating drug production and transport, working to raise awareness about the danger of drugs and bolstering its drug control capacity. Unilateral coercive measures against the Syrian Arab Republic complicated such efforts by preventing the acquisition of the modern technology needed to fight against drug networks.

82. Given its geographical location, the Syrian Arab Republic was a corridor for drug trafficking, which was exacerbated by foreign-supported terrorist groups financed by drugs. A disinformation campaign had been launched to accuse the Syrian Arab Republic of encouraging terrorist organizations to engage in drug trafficking. Those accusations were illogical, as such actions would destroy the country and society.

83. The Government was concerned about the legalization of cannabis in certain countries, in violation of the three United Nations drug control conventions and counter to the Political Declaration and Plan of Action of 2009. No efforts would be spared to combat the danger, including cooperating with all stakeholders to combat the scourge.

84. His delegation would not exercise the right of reply to address the statement made by the Israeli occupation authority, as it usually reserved that right to reply to Member States only. That statement, however, had been merely an attempt to conceal the crimes being committed on a daily basis against the Palestinian people and the Syrian people in the occupied Syrian Golan. He did not consider the statement worthy of a reply.

85. **Ms. Al Sinani** (Oman) said that his country supported all international efforts to combat human trafficking. From a legal and practical point of view, human trafficking was a global problem affecting all countries. Oman was proud of its efforts to fight human trafficking, as it took the matter very seriously. While the authorities had enacted laws and taken measures to curb it, Oman had also called on the United Nations to strengthen efforts. The root causes and their repercussions needed to be tackled.

86. Oman had extensive experience recognized by the international community, including in creating a community almost free of human trafficking. Oman would never yield in combating human trafficking.

87. **Ms. Rizk** (Egypt) said that Egypt was implementing its third national strategy for the period 2022–2026 to prevent and combat human trafficking, based on prevention, prosecution and protection. Taking a holistic approach that recognized interlinkages with other types of crimes, Egypt sought to protect victims, ensure effective law enforcement and prosecute perpetrators. Its efforts also targeted the root causes of such crimes while raising awareness of the related risks.

88. Egypt expressed its support for the UNODC mandate and reiterated the importance of the three drug control conventions as the key legally binding frameworks. It supported the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee to Elaborate a Comprehensive International Convention on Countering the Use of Information and Communications Technologies for Criminal Purposes and stressed the importance of its comprehensive nature and widened scope. The collection and exchange of electronic information were of central importance, together with international cooperation and capacity-building, for Member States to adapt and respond to the use of ICT for criminal purposes.

89. Alarmed by ICT-related criminal trends, Egypt highlighted States' obligation to regulate and the private sector's duty to exercise due diligence so as to prevent the use of ICT for a wide range of crimes. Particularly disconcerting was the fact that women and girls, children and persons with disabilities were disproportionately affected.

90. Egypt remained a staunch advocate for the restitution of cultural property and repatriation of illicit funds to the countries of origin as a means of respecting a people's economic, social and cultural rights.

91. **Ms. Dabo N'diaye** (Mali) said that Mali expressed its sympathy to the people and Government of Türkiye for the horrendous attack it had suffered. In combating the scourge of drugs, Mali was party to numerous international conventions. Terrorism and violent extremism had led the Government to redouble its efforts to combat that scourge. Agencies had been established, including a national drug control authority and a national authority to fight terrorism and transnational organized crime. Legislation criminalized drug use, and the related codes had been revised to bolster the legal framework. A further law regulated psychotropic substances. A decree set out the procedures for applying the law, including for the confiscation and destruction of drugs. The laws were complemented by a

decision that set limits on and governed the use of medicinal drugs.

92. The Government had taken several steps to counter drug-related crime and improve public security. The police forces had been bolstered, improving their capacity and logistics. Mali regularly carried out operations to dismantle trafficking organizations, seize illicit substances and destroy stockpiles to discourage traffickers.

93. The Government worked closely with neighbouring countries to strengthen border security through joint control to hinder traffickers' movements. Mali was also cooperating with UNODC and INTERPOL to strengthen its capacity. Its capacity was stronger as a result of its partners' support. Drug treatment programmes, including detox centres, had helped drug-addicted persons.

94. Combating drugs went hand-in-hand with combating terrorism. International cooperation was even more important as no country was safe from transnational organized crime. Mali stood ready to work alongside all stakeholders to fight the scourge of drugs.

95. **Mr. Maenpaa** (Observer for the Sovereign Order of Malta) said that crime knew no boundaries and undermined peace, security and development. Nevertheless, the United Nations had a pivotal role to play in shaping a world where justice prevailed.

96. Effective crime prevention was not solely about punishment, but began with tackling the root causes, which included, inter alia, poverty, inequality, lack of education and social exclusion. Investing in such areas helped shape crime-resilient societies. Criminal justice systems must be fair, transparent and efficient, ensuring due process for all. The work of the United Nations in promoting the rule of law was central. Combating transnational crime, such as trafficking in persons and drug trafficking and cybercrime, required a coordinated international response, and the United Nations conventions and mechanisms provided a framework to collectively address such global threats.

97. Crime prevention and criminal justice were not just about punitive measures, but also about building societies that fostered trust and inclusivity, ensuring safe environments for children to be free from fear and empowering individuals to seek justice when they were wronged. The United Nations was not just a forum for discussion, but also an instrument for translating words into action to prevent crime, promote a fair and efficient criminal justice system and build a world where the rule of law prevailed.

98. **Mr. Bulgaru** (Russian Federation), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that baseless accusations had been levelled against the Russian Federation by the representative of the European Union, an organization that had a curious way of speculating about crises in which it was directly involved. Rather than making long speeches about thousands of migrant deaths, the States members of the European Union should admit their responsibility, as members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, for the aggression against Libya and the destruction of Libyan statehood, which had caused a mass exodus. The current crisis in Ukraine would not have happened had it not been for the Maidan coup, which had been organized and financed by the European Union and the United States, and had brought neo-Nazi radicals and criminals to power who had waged war against the population of the Donbas region for eight long years. Furthermore, the problem of corruption and illicit arms trafficking was the direct result of the European Union pumping Kiev with weapons and funding long before the special military operation commenced.

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.