



Fifty-fourth session
Official Records

27 December 1999
English
Original: French

Third Committee

Summary record of the 18th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 20 October 1999, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Galušlea (Czech Republic)

Contents

Agenda item 109: Advancement of women (*continued*)

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

Agenda item 108: International drug control (*continued*)*

* Items which the Committee has decided to consider together.

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 109: Advancement of women

(continued) (A/C.3/54/L.13, L.15 and L.17/Rev.1)

Draft resolution A/C.3/54/L.13: Traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and girls

1. **Ms. Tahzib-Lie** (Netherlands), introduced draft resolution A/C.3/54/L.13 on behalf of the sponsors and noted that Algeria, Barbados, Belarus, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Egypt, Georgia, Guinea, Honduras, Iraq, Madagascar, Mongolia, Nigeria, Republic of Moldova, Saint Lucia, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Ukraine and Uruguay joined in sponsoring the draft resolution. For the third year in a row the Committee had before it a draft resolution on the subject, and she expected that, as in the past, it would be adopted without a vote. The sponsors hoped that its adoption would contribute to the elimination of the practices condemned in it, particularly female genital mutilation; that would indeed be an important step towards the improvement of the status and health of women, gender equality and the empowerment of women. She recalled that the General Assembly would review progress made during its special session entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century".

Draft resolution A/C.3/54/L.15: Improvement of the situation of women in rural areas

2. **Ms. Otgontsetseg** (Mongolia) introduced draft resolution A/C.3/54/L.15 on behalf of the sponsors and noted that Benin, Ethiopia, Guinea, Kyrgyzstan and Sri Lanka wished to join the sponsors. Referring to the report of the Secretary-General on the improvement of the situation of women in rural areas (A/54/123), she noted that women contributed on average more than 70 per cent of the labour necessary for food production in sub-Saharan Africa, accounted for approximately 50 per cent of agricultural production in Asia and played a dominant role in fishing and agriculture in the Pacific region, the Middle East and North Africa. The Secretary-General had also pointed out that the role of women in agriculture had been greatly under-reported and that new comparative studies should be undertaken. The sponsors hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus as in the past.

Draft resolution A/C.3/54/L.17/Rev.1: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

3. **Ms. Eckey** (Norway) introduced draft resolution A/C.3/54/L.17/Rev.1 on behalf of the sponsors and said that Bhutan, Cyprus, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, New Zealand and Slovakia wished to join the sponsors. Her delegation welcomed progress made in the implementation of the Convention, in particular the adoption by the General Assembly of the Optional Protocol to the Convention and hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted without a vote.

Agenda item 107: Crime prevention and criminal justice *(continued)* (A/54/3, A/54/69-E/1999/8 and Add.1, A/54/289, 340, 368 and 417; A/C.3/54/2; A/C.3/54/L.3, L.4, L.5 and L.6)

Agenda item 108: International drug control *(continued)* (A/54/3, A/54/186, A/54/293-E/1999/119, A/54/314-S/1999/942 and A/54/368; A/C.3/54/L.7)

4. **Mr. Kazykhanov** (Kazakhstan) said that organized crime and drug trafficking, aided and abetted by corruption, posed a serious threat to humankind. Flourishing international criminal activity was having an adverse effect on relations between States and no State could alone eliminate that scourge, which recognized no borders. Cooperation must therefore be universal and the United Nations had a major role to play in the fight against organized crime.

5. His delegation was convinced that an international convention against transnational organized crime would be an effective international legal instrument for Member States in their common struggle, and he hoped that preparatory work would be completed by 2000. The additional protocols to the convention must become an effective mechanism to complement the activities undertaken by States to suppress the most dangerous types of offence. The Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders would give a powerful impetus to the efforts of the international community to combat crime and define strategic directions for the twenty-first century.

6. Recognizing that crime and drug trafficking were threatening democratization and liberalization, the President of Kazakhstan had stated that the fight against corruption and tax evasion was one of the most important tasks ahead. The State Anti-corruption Commission and the Ministry of State Revenues had been granted wide-

ranging powers for that purpose; the new Criminal Code and other legislation, developed in accordance with international standards, formed the legal basis for the anti-crime activities of national law enforcement bodies.

7. It was essential to strengthen international cooperation in the area of the prevention and elimination of corruption. Measures to combat the corruption associated with organized crime must be included in the draft convention against transnational organized crime. The workshop on combating corruption to be organized in conjunction with the Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders would be a welcome and timely event.

8. Action to combat violence against women was one of the priorities set out in his Government's policy to advance the status of women. It was encouraging to see that the problems of crime and criminal justice were being examined from a gender perspective, as illustrated in the Secretary-General's report on the elimination of violence against women (A/54/69-E/1999/8). The workshop on women in the criminal justice system during the Tenth Congress would provide very useful practical information concerning crimes committed by women.

9. Organized crime currently threatened regional as well as international security and the Declaration on the Principles Guiding Relations among the States Members of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA), contained in document A/54/368, adopted on 14 September 1999, had stressed the need to strengthen cooperation in social fields such as the fight against drug trafficking, drug abuse and organized crime. The participants at the Summit of Heads of State of the "Shanghai Five" (China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan) had discussed, *inter alia*, international crime issues and had declared in their final document that effective measures must be taken to fight against international crime in all its forms. The decisions taken at that meeting provided the basis for cooperation among the competent authorities of the States in question.

10. At its fifth high-level meeting in May 1998, the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), which provided a framework for cooperation in combating crime, had called on its member States to work together to combat the smuggling of narcotics and psychotropic substances and had adopted plans to train drug control experts.

11. States members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) were coordinating their efforts on the basis of the interstate programme of joint measures to combat organized crime in the CIS countries up to the year 2000,

which the representative of Belarus had described in detail at a previous meeting of the Committee. Kazakhstan was also a party to multilateral legal assistance treaties.

12. In conclusion, he said he hoped that the Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders and the adoption of new international legal instruments would help to strengthen efforts to combat crime.

13. **Mr. Nuanthasing** (Lao People's Democratic Republic) cited some of the statistics provided by the Executive Director of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and described several of his Government's activities. In particular, he mentioned the creation in the early 1990s of a National Commission for Drug Control and Supervision and a Counter-Narcotic Office; an amendment to article 135 of the Penal Code to provide more severe penalties for drug trafficking; and the launching of many development projects. As a result of those initiatives, illicit opium production had fallen from 140 tons in 1996 to 123 tons in 1997. In 1998, 405 offenders had been arrested and large quantities of various drugs had been seized. His Government was making every effort to combat opium production at the national, regional and international levels and to strengthen its cooperation with other countries and with international organizations. In preparation for Expo 2000 in Hanover, Germany, an international jury had selected five projects, including one developed by his country with UNDCP assistance, the purpose of which had been to reduce opium poppy growing in the Palaveck region. As a result of that fruitful cooperation, opium production had fallen from 3.5 tons to less than 100 kilograms; the region, previously rice-deficient, currently had a rice surplus; and the living conditions of its 6,000 inhabitants had greatly improved.

14. In May 1999, his Government and UNDCP had signed a historic agreement that represented a breakthrough in efforts to eliminate a major source of opium production in Asia and had enabled his Government and the donors to address openly a development issue that was closely related to poverty and drug consumption in the north of the country. The UNDCP strategy was to invest \$80 million over a six-year period in the opium growing districts of his country and to support ongoing and new projects. His Government was determined to translate that programme into reality with the help of UNDCP and the international community. It was also committed to eradicating illicit opium production and consumption, to cooperating with UNDCP and to achieving the goals that had been set. Because the well-being of many other countries depended on its success, his Government called

on the international community to support the activities that it was carrying out in cooperation with UNDCP.

15. **Mr. Amin** (Afghanistan) said it was unfortunate that UNDCP had struck an agreement with the Taliban for a project intended to help rural poppy growers to find other lucrative activities. In fact, it had been reported that most of the poppy fields were in the hands of the Taliban, that the Taliban militia approved the smuggling of narcotics into the Islamic Republic of Iran, that Taliban officials charged fees to permit the unhindered operation of laboratories and that the mullahs collected a 10 per cent tax on the opium crop.

16. It might have been expected that the peace which the Taliban claimed to have restored would have made it possible to counter drug production effectively. However, that had not occurred, and it was the proceeds of drug trafficking that accounted for the 1998 economic boom in Kandahar, where the Taliban leader, Mullah Omar, resided. Under those circumstances, it was no surprise that the UNDCP project had failed. Poppy production in Afghanistan had more than doubled between 1998 and 1999 and accounted for 75 per cent of the world's illicit opium. Taliban rule had destroyed Afghan civil society and forced hundreds of thousands of people to leave their homes. Unable to reduce poppy production in Afghanistan, UNDCP had drawn a security cordon around that country, tightening its borders with its neighbours.

17. Afghanistan fully supported the new UNDCP strategy. However, although, owing to various temporary circumstances, there would probably be a short-term decrease in opium yields, the Taliban dictatorship would continue to encourage production. It was therefore important for UNDCP to continue its efforts to stop the illicit cultivation of poppy and to save the international community from the scourge of drugs.

18. **Mr. Lewis** (Antigua and Barbuda), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community, said that he welcomed the reform of the United Nations system and that it was essential for the Centre for International Crime Prevention, and the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme as a whole, to be provided with the necessary resources.

19. The countries of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) were eagerly awaiting the results of the study undertaken by the Centre for International Crime Prevention, which could alert States to the presence of criminal groups within their territory. The CARICOM countries hoped that an international convention against transnational organized crime would be prepared in time

for consideration during the Millennium Assembly in 2000; of particular interest were the optional protocols to that convention.

20. Shortly after the Fourth World Conference on Women, CARICOM countries had identified critical areas and had created national machinery for the advancement of women. Legislation had been enacted to prevent and punish domestic violence; safe houses had been established, training had been provided to officials and special task forces had been set up, in some cases with the help of the Canadian Government and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

21. Given that the populations of the CARICOM member States largely consisted of young people, juvenile justice was a key component of criminal justice programmes. In order to prevent antisocial behaviour, CARICOM member States sought to engage young people in participatory activities, such as the commemoration of the International Year of Older Persons and participation in the political process. In the case of juvenile delinquency, it was rehabilitation which was stressed. Unfortunately, Caribbean countries served as transit points for drug trafficking, which made young people susceptible to becoming drug addicts themselves. The treatment and rehabilitation of addicts posed daunting financial and technical problems.

22. Caribbean countries strongly supported an integrated, regional approach to criminal justice. To that end, a seminar would be held in Jamaica from 28 to 30 October 1999 to develop regional strategies.

23. His delegation was concerned at draft resolution A/C.3/54/L.8 submitted by the European Union, in which States which still maintained the death penalty were urged "to establish a moratorium on executions, with a view to completely abolishing the death penalty". The Governments of the CARICOM member countries considered that the most fundamental human right was that of being protected against the activities of criminals, which could destabilize society and have a spill-over effect on neighbouring countries. The trafficking in narcotic drugs, terrorism and various other crimes which violated the moral and legal foundation of society called for a just punishment. The peoples of the Caribbean would protest strongly against an abolition of the death penalty; their Governments would be accused of protecting criminals and penalizing the families of victims. While respecting the position of the European Union, the Caribbean States believed that it ought not to attempt to impose its beliefs on others, and strongly urged it to withdraw its draft

resolution, which undermined the national sovereignty of States maintaining the death penalty.

24. **Mr. Vienravi** (Thailand) said that his country had implemented a number of preventive and curative measures to tackle the drug problem, but that much remained to be done.

25. The spread of methamphetamine was the country's most serious concern. Cheap and easy to carry, the drug was spreading easily, particularly among labourers and young people from broken homes. Eighty per cent of the drug was produced in neighbouring countries and smuggled into Thailand. Although the Thai Government was working in partnership with those countries, the problem was only worsening.

26. With a view to combating money-laundering, Thailand had enacted a law which had entered into force in August 1999, and had set up a national focal point. Thailand was now ready to become a party to the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

27. While globalization had allowed drug trafficking to develop, the international community was not unarmed, since it had been able to form a united fronted against the scourge, thanks to cooperation.

28. **Ms. Li Sangu** (China) said that the international community had demonstrated a strong political will to fight against drugs. However, the illicit drug problem continued to haunt the world. With a view to tackling the problem, the United Nations should strengthen its efforts, *inter alia*, by implementing the strategies and decisions adopted at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly, paying particular attention to the strengthening of international cooperation.

29. Since the special session, the Chinese Government had reinforced its national drug control activities and had strengthened international cooperation. It had accordingly approved the establishment of a National Committee for Drug Control, as well as an Anti-Drug Foundation, and was preparing to create "drug-free communities". It had also launched education campaigns, set up import-export verification mechanisms and strengthened controls on narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and chemical precursors.

30. At the regional level, the Chinese Government had taken an active part in the subregional drug control cooperation programme initiated by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and had helped develop substitute crops in those areas of the

"Golden Triangle" which had been economically dependent on opium cultivation.

31. Experience had shown that, in order to win the fight against the drug scourge, international cooperation must be strengthened. Certain principles should be recalled in that connection. Firstly, consumer, producer and transit countries should cooperate on a basis of shared responsibility and strict respect for the sovereignty of States. Secondly, the drug control strategies defined at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly should be comprehensively implemented, existing control mechanisms should be strengthened, and both demand and supply should be addressed. Finally, the international community should provide financial and technical assistance for promoting alternative development.

32. **Mr. Bilman** (Turkey) said that the problem of drug abuse, which threatened the stability and development of countries, called for strengthened international collaboration.

33. By virtue of its geographical location, Turkey was situated on one of the main routes for illicit drug trafficking — the "Balkan route" — which gave the country a specific role in the fight against drugs. In fact, the considerable seizures of drugs carried out in Turkey testified to the authorities' concern to combat the scourge.

34. Turkey was a party to all the United Nations conventions on the production and consumption of and trade in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, and actively participated in the efforts of the Organization's various bodies in those fields. Turkey was a party to 44 bilateral agreements and had taken effective measures to prevent illicit opium poppy cultivation at the national level. As the Executive Director of the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention had stated, the country had achieved spectacular results in the area of alternative development.

35. Turkey believed that, in the fight against drugs, countries should pay particular attention to two problems. Firstly, they should maintain stringent controls over the export of precursors, including acetic anhydride. Secondly, more attention should be paid to the close link between illicit drug production and trafficking and the financial resources of terrorist groups and criminal organizations.

36. In conclusion, Turkey, which was committed to pursuing its fight against drugs, recalled that international cooperation should be strengthened with a view to eradicating the scourge.

37. **Mr. Al-Nasser** (Qatar) observed that his country was neither a producer nor an exporter of drugs. However, its proximity to such countries made it necessary for it to exercise great vigilance to ensure that Qatar was not used as a transit country; hence the importance of cooperation with neighbouring countries.

38. In Qatar drug addicts were considered to be victims rather than criminals and the focus was consequently more on prevention and rehabilitation than on repression (including through the establishment of treatment centres and the launching of awareness campaigns).

39. The drug problem had assumed alarming proportions, so much so that profits from drug trafficking and money-laundering exceeded the gross national product (GNP) of a good many States.

40. In order to tackle the problem, many States, Qatar included, had promulgated laws specific to their traditions and national sensitivities; those laws provided, *inter alia*, for the death penalty. That was in line with article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the penalty was moreover, just and necessary to ensure respect for the right of victims and it was necessary to enable countries to live in peace and security. He was surprised that the European Union had submitted a draft resolution which would not enjoy consensus. The European Union and its member countries had the right to pass legislation in accordance with their beliefs, but that legislation would not be practicable at the international level. The European Union's proposal amounted to interference in the internal affairs of other States and an infringement of their sovereignty. His delegation strongly hoped that the European Union, out of concern for consensus and respect for diversity, would withdraw its draft resolution and not seek to impose its culture and beliefs on others.

41. Trafficking in women and children (for the purpose of sexual exploitation or slavery) and corruption constituted further manifestations of transnational crime which had caused all States to pass laws. Countries maintaining the death penalty in order to tackle such scourges needed to do so in order to protect society and respect the rights of victims.

42. **Ms. Tohtohodjarva** (Kyrgyzstan) pointed out that at the dawn of the twenty-first century and in an era of globalization, international cooperation was more necessary than ever to the resolution of such complex problems as drug trafficking.

43. Drug trafficking and the associated problem of organized crime had also affected Central Asia and was

threatening the political and social stability of the region's countries and of the international community as a whole.

44. Armed factions associated with drug syndicates had infiltrated southern Kyrgyzstan, and although they had lately withdrawn to Tajikistan, strengthened international cooperation was needed to deal with that type of situation. To that end, the establishment of an international database providing access to research results, to international instruments on drug trafficking and corruption and to best practices would be an excellent initiative.

45. Links between the various mechanisms for tackling transnational organized crime should be strengthened. Research could help uncover criminal associations and provide reliable data on new modalities of international crime. Kyrgyzstan thus supported the proposal of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme regarding the preparation of a biennial report on organized crime in the field of narcotic drugs.

46. Regional cooperation efforts were under way in Central Asia. In September 1999, the first organizational session of the intergovernmental committee to combat illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs and drug addiction of the Central Asian Economic Community had been held at Bishkek. Measures had been taken to strengthen cooperation and to create a common legislative base. Kyrgyzstan was cooperating with the United Nations Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and had recently signed an agreement to that end. The Executive Director of the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention had recently visited the country. Kyrgyzstan attached great importance to the participation of the Executive Director at the second meeting of signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation between Central Asian countries in combating drugs; the meeting had ended with the signing of a protocol on strengthening cooperation between those countries and on the Office's support for their activities.

47. **Ms. Faetanini** (San Marino) said that the General Assembly, at its twentieth special session, had stressed that drug supply and demand were closely linked and had placed the drug problem in its true perspective by emphasizing its social, economic and political implications.

48. Judicial cooperation among States was crucial to combating the illegal drug trade, a \$400 billion business in which money was laundered through the financial and banking system. In order to tackle the problem, San Marino had, in 1995, signed the European Convention on

Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime.

49. As the major consumers of illicit drugs, industrialized countries would do well to refer to the Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction, which represented the first international agreement in that field. In view of the devastating consequences of narcotic drugs, which were consumed by some 200 million users around the world, measures to tackle the problem should not be delayed any longer. In particular, a preventive culture should be built, involving schools families and communities. The work carried out by UNDCP in the field of prevention and the international campaign for a drug-free twenty-first century should be commended.

50. Nonetheless, demand for drugs continued to grow. In order to improve prevention strategies, it was necessary to understand the root causes of such a pattern of self-destruction and to determine the underlying logic, which resisted all rational explanation. Indeed, as long as demand persisted, the eradication of drugs would be a Sisyphean task.

51. In San Marino, as in other developed countries, the high standard of living seemed to encourage consumption of so-called recreational drugs such as ecstasy. Control of such amphetamine-type stimulants — which were spreading rapidly — was complicated by the fact that anyone could produce them anywhere. In 1998, her Government had accordingly hosted an international expert level meeting on drug consumption in recreational areas.

52. Drug addiction represented a very human answer to very human difficulties. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs, at its forty-second session, had identified the following problems: unemployment, neglect, violence and sexual abuse. Indeed, the list might well have included abuse of any kind, poverty and armed conflict. However, in the case of socially integrated youth, it must be humbly acknowledged that there was, as yet, no satisfactory answer.

53. In order to better counteract the problem of drug consumption, it seemed crucial to involve those men and women who had once been drug abusers. Their contribution would be particularly valuable to experts studying demand reduction strategies and the causes of drug abuse. Her delegation believed that if the emphasis was placed on condemnation and criminalization — rather than on rehabilitation and reintegration — it would not be possible to enlist the help of drug abusers in eradicating drug demand.

54. **Mr. Rabuka** (Fiji) said that, in an increasingly interdependent world, the porosity of national borders created new risks of terrorism and corruption and could even threaten sovereignty. The enormity of such threats called for a collective response from the international community.

55. The Government of Fiji had expended considerable resources on various measures to reduce the supply of and demand for illicit drugs. The police, the Ministry of Education and non-governmental organizations had been involved in educational programmes targeted specifically at young people. Crime prevention committees, in which the chiefs participated, had been established to address the problem of the cultivation of marijuana. Since 1990, those guilty of illegal possession of drugs were subject to mandatory imprisonment.

56. On 25 September 1999, Fiji had held its first “Crime Free Day”, with programmes designed to increase awareness of crime and the role of the police, parents, teachers, churches and youth organizations in preventing criminal activities.

57. Fiji was aware that criminal organizations used their strategic location in order to carry out illegal activities. Accordingly, the Government had enacted legislation on mutual assistance in criminal matters and on the proceeds of crimes; it had also signed agreements on such matters with the Governments of Australia and New Zealand.

58. Anxious to ensure good governance and transparency in public administration, the Government was studying the possibility of establishing a permanent anti-corrupt practices commission.

59. His delegation wished to draw attention to the close relationship between poverty and unemployment, on the one hand, and drug trafficking and abuse, on the other, as it had already done during the fifty-third session. Without sustainable development, no programme to combat illicit drugs could be effective. Consequently, it was essential that the international community should address the root causes of the economic difficulties of developing countries.

60. The small Eastern Caribbean island States had been accused of being a money-laundering centre because one third of the \$8 trillion deposited in offshore banking havens had been invested there. It was true that, owing to the decline in the banana industry, those countries needed other sources of revenue, but not all the money that was invested in them was illegal money — far from it. The international community should adopt a more balanced attitude: it should not ignore the economic problems of the

small island developing States while reproaching them for seeking other sources of financing.

61. **Mr. Ben Shaban** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that the drug problem was a growing concern and that the solution required the international community to increase its efforts to prevent drug production and consumption.

62. Preventive action (education and information) was required in order to reduce demand, and drug addicts should be rehabilitated. To reduce the supply, illegal crops should be destroyed, international cooperation for developing substitute crops should be strengthened and the control of precursors should be tightened.

63. Any national action would be insufficient if it was not supported by effective international cooperation that fully respected the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the State. Such cooperation should allow States to rapidly exchange information on drug trafficking and related problems, particularly money-laundering; to apply laws that allowed drug traffickers to be severely punished and their assets confiscated; and to apply drug-related international instruments and General Assembly resolutions.

64. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya was not a drug producing country but it had recently become a transit country. It applied the most severe punishments to drug traffickers and drug users (life imprisonment, the death penalty), but the drug problem persisted. It had had to adopt administrative, legal and security measures and, in particular, to organize information campaigns for the most vulnerable groups, especially young people and students, with the help of volunteers and non-governmental organizations.

65. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya was a party to all the international conventions on the fight against drugs and strictly applied their provisions. Also, it fought drug trafficking on a regional and international scale within the framework of bilateral and multilateral agreements with Mediterranean, Arab and African countries. It recognized the efforts of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and hoped that, in future, the programme would have adequate funding to carry out its mandate fully.

66. **Ms. Gittens-Joseph** (Trinidad and Tobago) said that she associated her delegation with the statement made by Antigua and Barbuda on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) member States. The fight against organized crime required significant efforts by Governments and the international community and they

had placed it high on their agendas. Trinidad and Tobago awaited with interest the Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders.

67. In Trinidad and Tobago, the Government had had to take measures to prevent the drug barons from endangering the country's sovereignty and to ensure the population's safety. Administrative and legal steps had been taken, particularly against money-laundering; law enforcement agencies, backed by the army, had implemented a plan of action to reduce crime; and a national agency responsible for coordinating all national efforts in the fight against drug trafficking had been created.

68. Trinidad and Tobago was also very actively combating crime on an international level. It was hosting the secretariat of a task force for the Caribbean subregion, established under the 1996 Barbados plan of action, which was responsible for studying measures against money-laundering; it had adopted, in collaboration with other CARICOM member States, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States a series of measures to protect legal personnel, juries, and witnesses and their families; it had signed bilateral agreements with the Governments of Canada and the United Kingdom; cooperated with the Venezuelan Government in the establishment of a mixed commission on drugs. Furthermore, it was hosting an office of the United States Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), enabling Trinidad and Tobago to cooperate with the United States and other countries in the region.

69. Many countries were experiencing a marked increase in violent crime, which, at times, resulted in the massacre of whole families. In order to maintain law and order in its territory, every State had the right to decide for itself how to punish those who violated the fundamental rules of society. Trinidad and Tobago fully recognized the right of those countries who opposed the death penalty to abolish it, but considered that, in return, such countries should recognize the right of those in favour to apply it.

70. **Mr. Belinga-Eboutou** (Cameroon) said that his country was a party to all the international conventions on drug control and had recently acceded to the statute of the African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI), which it hoped would support its efforts to combat widespread illicit drug use.

71. The Government of Cameroon was in the process of systematically adapting its legislation to respond effectively to the problem posed by illicit trafficking in drugs and firearms, money-laundering and related criminal activities. It had recently established a national committee

on drug control and, convinced of the need for enhanced international cooperation, had passed a law in 1997 concerning mutual judicial assistance against trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors.

72. In Cameroon, as in many developing countries, the results of anti-drug efforts were disappointing, because the police force and customs service lacked modern equipment and trained personnel. They needed more help from the international community in introducing new methods of drug detection and investigation of traffickers and in acquiring modern equipment.

73. The Government had been pleased to receive the mission of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) to Cameroon in April 1999 and hoped that the mission had served to convince UNDCP of the urgency of setting up a subregional structure for Central Africa.

74. **Mr. Bu-Qurrah** (United Arab Emirates) said that drug trafficking was assuming increasingly disturbing proportions, particularly in developing countries affected by conflict, where trafficking stoked the violence and undermined economic and social development. According to the most recent statistics, drug traffickers realized about \$400 billion annually, or 8 per cent of the volume of international trade worldwide. The situation demanded stepped-up international efforts against drugs and assistance to developing countries to take the needed steps on the national level.

75. Development was undoubtedly the best means of reducing the production and consumption of drugs, particularly in countries where the plants that served as a base for manufacture were cultivated. It was therefore important to reinforce regional and international cooperation in combating drugs and essential to assist developing countries — whether drug producing or otherwise — in the administrative, judicial, economic and social areas, among other things by sharing information on investigation techniques, crop substitution, detoxification and reintegration of drug addicts into society.

76. In keeping with the principles of Islam, which forbade the use of drugs, his country was expending great efforts to counter the drug scourge. It had passed laws severely penalizing drug trafficking and consumption; set up databases on those two subjects; provided the national drug control bodies with the financial and human resources required; and set up a police and customs presence at land and sea borders. It had ratified the three international

conventions on drug control and concluded regional and bilateral cooperation agreements on the subject.

77. The United Arab Emirates believed that it had the right to apply severe penalties to drug traffickers and users, including the death penalty, in accordance with its laws and religious beliefs. His delegation aligned itself with the speakers who had claimed that right for their countries at the current and previous meetings.

78. **Mr. Raymond** (Haiti) said that his country was making a great effort under the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme to restore the rule of law and to reduce crime within its territory.

79. On 8 May 1998 his Government had promulgated a law on judicial reform that stressed the independence of the judiciary and restructured the court and prison systems. However, those reforms could not in themselves resolve all problems. At present there were too few justices of the peace and examining magistrates, and the judicial system was woefully lacking in resources. Those factors hindered the proper administration of justice and explained the many instances of lengthy detention after arrest, a situation that gave rise to human rights violations. To break the deadlock, his Government had established an office charged with screening cases of pre-trial detention to enable the detainees to be heard by a judge and released more quickly.

80. His delegation wished to express its gratitude to the international community for its support for the judicial reforms undertaken by his Government. The assistance given in training judges, the funds provided to help impoverished defendants procure legal aid, and the equipment donated to judicial institutions had certainly contributed to the improvement of the Haitian justice system.

81. The Government of Haiti had also begun to review the Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure with a view to ensuring respect for fundamental rights and restoring social harmony by doing away with impunity, ensuring a fair trial and taking into account the social dimension of disputes. To counter illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs and money-laundering of trafficking proceeds, it had taken steps to equip the police properly, train police personnel and tighten controls on bank transactions related to drug trafficking. His Government was committed to doing all in its power to comply with the international commitments it had assumed by signing the Barbados Plan (1996) and the Santiago Declaration and Plan of Action (1998).

82. A large number of young offenders of Haitian origin residing in the United States, Canada, France and some other countries had been deported after serving their sentences. Their repatriation to Haiti, where the new national police force had just been set up and judicial and prison systems were still weak, only aggravated the situation and threatened to undermine some of the Government's major development projects. Such youth needed to be received, taken in hand and reintegrated into society, a task which the competent authorities were striving to accomplish despite inadequate financial resources.

83. Recently the crime rate had increased in Haiti despite the efforts of the understaffed police force (600 members for a population of over 8 million) operating without the support of armed forces.

84. **Mr. Valdivieso** (Colombia) emphasized that the best way to combat organized crime was to strengthen bilateral cooperation and to cooperate on a global scale, while taking into account the differing legal systems. It had been in that spirit that Colombia had participated in the Vienna meetings of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Elaboration of a Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and of associated protocols.

85. On the subject of that convention, his delegation had four observations to make.

86. First, it was important to clearly define the term "transnational organization" and to determine if application of the Convention would depend on whether the crimes defined therein presupposed the existence of such an organization; without such clarification the Convention's scope of application could be restricted.

87. Second, it was important to introduce a mechanism for conflict resolution based on solid legal criteria in order to avoid jurisdictional conflicts.

88. Third, three protocols had been annexed to the Convention. He welcomed the decision of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to expand the scope of the protocol on trafficking in women and children to include traffic in all human beings. With regard to the protocol on the illicit manufacture of and trafficking in firearms, he noted the possibility of referring to a similar convention that had been adopted some time previously in Latin America. In any case, a protocol would be insufficient by itself; it was also necessary for States to adopt national legislation in the matter. As for the protocol on the illegal transport of and trafficking in migrants, its utility was borne out by the figures: 4 million illegal

migrants and \$7 billion in illegal profits each year. Nevertheless, it was important that the protocol should not penalize the migrants themselves, who were the victims of the traffic, but rather the criminal organizations involved. Moreover, mechanisms to facilitate the repatriation of victims should be implemented.

89. Finally, his delegation strongly favoured the adoption of an international legal instrument to combat corruption that could be modelled on the Inter-American Convention already in force. In that regard, the Centre for International Crime Prevention could play an important role in helping to strengthen national institutions. Fortunately, voluntary contributions from Governments had allowed a considerable increase in its budget.

90. **Mr. Alaei** (Islamic Republic of Iran) recalled that the new forms of criminality made possible by advances in science, technology and communications had spurred the United Nations to increase its efforts to combat the phenomenon, by establishing the Ad Hoc Committee on the Elaboration of an International Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, which was also drafting three protocols. His delegation was of the view that the remaining divergences of opinion among States on the topic of the Convention and its protocols were due to the fact that certain States lacked the material and human means to ensure its implementation. Development of technical cooperation activities to assist developing countries to implement their national and international commitments deserved greater international attention.

91. His delegation was of the view that it would not be possible to insist that the death penalty be abolished in all societies and all regions, as each country had the inviolable right, in accordance with the principles of international law, to freely choose its own criminal justice system as long as it respected the commitments it had undertaken in the framework of international human rights instruments.

92. It attached great importance to the work of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme and to the work of the Centre for International Crime Prevention, while at the same time emphasizing the need to maintain a certain balance in the Programme between issues of transnational organized crime and other more general issues; it welcomed the discussions of such issues as corruption, juvenile justice and crime prevention during the eighth session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

93. Iran favoured the strengthening of the capacities of the Centre for International Crime Prevention, and noted with interest the global programmes against corruption and

trafficking in human beings and the global studies on transnational organized crime.

94. His delegation welcomed efforts to give greater specificity to the topics of the tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, and also welcomed the preparation of a single draft declaration; it emphasized, however, that efforts should be made to allow for the widest possible deliberation on resolutions and decisions of the Congress.

95. **Mr. Bhatti** (Pakistan) recalled that while globalization had brought enormous economic and social benefits to millions of people, it had been accompanied by an increase in the illicit traffic in drugs, human beings, weapons and money-laundering and the integration of criminal organizations from different parts of the world. Each year, transnational organized crime took in some \$1.5 trillion, while money-laundering alone involved some \$300 to \$400 billion.

96. International cooperation was necessary in order to combat that scourge efficiently. Pakistan hoped that the Ad Hoc Committee on the Elaboration of a Convention against Transnational Organized Crime would be able to complete its work by the beginning of the year 2000, with the cooperation and realism of the participating countries.

97. It was essential that criminals be prosecuted and punished in order to ensure the security of property and the preservation of social order. It was up to States to adopt legislation suitable to their national cultures and to prosecute and punish criminals in accordance with domestic legislation through due process of law. Pakistan respected the decision of the countries that had abolished the death penalty, but trusted that those countries would respect the decision of those which had opted for legislation adapted to their own national conditions and cultures. In view of the diversity of cultures, it was natural that different societies should have differing views on issues of crime prevention and criminal justice; that should not inhibit international cooperation to combat organized crime, with full respect for the sovereignty of States and the principle of non-interference in internal affairs and mutual respect.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.