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Chair: Mr. Hilale (Morocco)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 106: Crime prevention and criminal justice (*continued*) (A/70/90-E/2015/81, A/70/93, A/70/94, A/70/99, A/70/121 and A/70/407)

Agenda item 107: International drug control (*continued*) (A/70/87-E/2015/79 and A/70/98)

1. **Mr. Fedotov** (Executive Director, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)), speaking via video link, said that it was a critical time for global efforts to prevent crime and promote justice and the rule of law. UNODC was committed to helping Member States achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and targets under the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by providing technical assistance on the ground and supporting the national implementation of relevant international conventions and United Nations standards on crime prevention and criminal justice.

2. UNODC promoted the development of clear indicators concerning criminal justice, drugs and crime to enable States to monitor progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals and foster change on the ground. Strengthening public-private partnerships was essential to achieve sustainable development outcomes and UNODC was working closely with the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and other partners to create effective, efficient partnerships. That would also be a main theme of the sixth session of the Conference of the States parties to the Convention against Corruption.

3. The special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem to be held in 2016 would be an opportunity to examine the impact of illicit drugs on sustainable development and seek common solutions. As the lead United Nations entity assisting Member States in addressing the challenges of illicit drugs, UNODC would continue to support the preparations for that session. To that end, UNODC had held a briefing with the President of the General Assembly and the Chair of the Board of the special session, and another briefing was scheduled for 20 November 2015. UNODC was also working with its United Nations partners to provide support on the ground, including promoting access to controlled medicines to relieve pain and suffering, and expanding prevention and treatment services for drug use disorders and HIV.

4. Through its integrated country, regional and global programmes, UNODC was supporting the cross-border pursuit of traffickers and organized criminal groups, as well as measures to address insecurity and violence associated with drug trafficking. Its efforts were supported by high-quality research and flagship publications. A survey on opium and Afghanistan would be released soon and, in 2016, UNODC would finalize research on another growing threat to development and security: wildlife and forest crime.

5. UNODC was working with Member States and multilateral bodies to combat illicit financial flows and money-laundering. It was also devising more sophisticated frameworks for regional and interregional cooperation to counter organized crime through initiatives such as “Networking the Networks”. Furthermore, UNODC had implemented a major initiative designed to strengthen the capacity of countries in the Middle East, North Africa and the Balkans in order to prevent and suppress terrorism, particularly the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters. It had also facilitated the development of the International Guidelines for Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Responses with Respect to Trafficking in Cultural Property and Other Related Offences, which had been adopted by the General Assembly in 2014.

6. The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners were helping to promote the humane treatment of prisoners and represented a significant step in advancing human rights. The Office was also supporting Governments in their efforts to address migrant smuggling and human trafficking and had published a report on criminal justice measures to combat violence against migrants. As part of its anti-trafficking efforts, UNODC provided legal and financial aid to victims through the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. In addition, the Blue Heart Campaign against Human Trafficking was raising awareness of the plight of victims and inspiring action to stop human trafficking.

7. Through its network of field offices, UNODC was supporting Member States to address critical challenges in a broad range of areas across the globe. However, its financial situation remained vulnerable and it required more sustainable funding to continue delivering a high standard of technical cooperation to

Member States. Despite its broad mandate, UNODC received less than 1 per cent of the overall regular budget of the United Nations. Pledges for voluntary contributions were high but general purpose contributions needed for core functions were declining. As a result, the Office had reviewed its funding structure to deliver more with less and to ensure strategic and operational coherence across its services. Nevertheless, it urgently needed a solid stream of stable and predictable resources.

8. **Mr. Ríos Sánchez** (Mexico) said that his delegation was grateful to UNODC for the assistance that it had provided in preparing for the international conference on illicit drug markets held in Mexico City from 17 to 18 September 2015. The outcome document of that conference would assist Member States in their efforts to combat drug trafficking.

9. Section VI of the report of the Secretary-General on international cooperation against the world drug problem (A/70/98) mentioned the collaboration between UNODC and the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, but it did not mention the work of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) or the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), even though those agencies had prepared documents that would be helpful for the special session of the General Assembly planned for 2016. His delegation therefore wondered what steps could be taken to improve coordination within the United Nations system with regard to drug policies. It also wondered why the work of the International Narcotics Control Board was mentioned but not the recommendations made by that Board in its annual report, which were very relevant and innovative. Efforts to reduce the demand for and supply of illicit drugs could be futile if the relevant socioeconomic factors that functioned as drivers of the drug problem were not addressed in an effective and sustainable manner. The Board had recommended that Governments should address those factors as part of a comprehensive, integrated and balanced approach and that they should incorporate drug control into the broader socioeconomic development agenda. His delegation wondered whether that recommendation would be incorporated into the work of UNODC.

10. Mexico was facing new challenges relating to alternative development programmes in urban areas and his delegation wondered whether UNODC would

be able to provide technical assistance in that area through its regional offices.

11. Lastly, the texts produced by UNODC and the Board of the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem, following the informative meeting held the previous week, should be circulated to all Permanent Missions in New York to allow for a fuller understanding of the preparatory process for the special session.

12. **Mr. Al-Kumaim** (Yemen) said that Yemen was currently facing a situation of instability and conflict as well as a serious humanitarian crisis. Given the links between instability and increased crime and drug use, his delegation sought further information on UNODC plans and projects designed to assist countries in tackling those challenges. It was especially interested in knowing more about the Blue Heart Campaign for countries facing instability, conflict and war, given that drug smuggling and the trafficking of persons was on the rise and there were now 1.6 million displaced persons in Yemen who were not receiving the assistance that they needed.

13. **Mr. Rabi** (Morocco) said that his delegation wished to learn more about how work in New York and Vienna was coordinated, and wondered what steps could be taken to strengthen synergies and coherence in that regard, especially in view of the budgetary constraints faced by UNODC.

14. **Mr. Elbahi** (Sudan) said that his Government was committed to honouring its obligations under the relevant regional and international instruments on combating drugs and crime. As part of its efforts to combat corruption, the Government had established a national body for women's issues and the protection of women and girls against all forms of violence. Women participated at the highest levels of Government and in the judiciary. They were also represented in civil and military services, including at the ambassadorial level.

15. Legislation had been adopted to combat human trafficking, especially the trafficking of women and children, and the Sudan had hosted a regional conference on combating human trafficking and smuggling in the Horn of Africa. It had also signed a number of bilateral agreements on transborder security to prevent the infiltration of terrorist groups across borders. His delegation hoped that the special session of the General Assembly planned for 2016 would enable countries to put an end to terrorism.

16. Stressing that efforts to address crime and drugs should take into account development issues and poverty as the root causes of those phenomena, his delegation wondered what UNODC was doing to incorporate those elements into its work.

17. **Mr. Fedotov** (Executive Director, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)) said that issues related to transnational organized crime, including illicit trafficking, drugs and terrorism, must be addressed in a broader socioeconomic context. The new 2030 Agenda would allow countries to do that, as it provided a set of Sustainable Development Goals which established clear links between socioeconomic development and the rule of law, corruption, crime, the world drug problem, health and climate change. The Goals covered every area and the role of the United Nations was to support Member States in implementing them. The mandate of UNODC covered many of those issues but it could not cover the entire 2030 Agenda. However, the Office would do its utmost to support Member States in that regard.

18. Alternative development was a major issue and, following successes in that area in Latin America, UNODC was working to support the sharing of best practices with other countries and continents. An international conference on alternative development would be held in Bangkok and the conclusions of that conference should contribute to the preparatory process for the special session of the General Assembly planned for 2016. The special session would be held just six months after the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda and efforts must be made to build bridges between both.

19. UNODC was concerned about its budgetary situation and hoped that Member States would provide assistance in that regard. The Fifth Committee had adopted budget decisions which had been endorsed by the General Assembly, but UNODC needed support from both the Fifth and the Third Committees.

20. Good progress was being made in achieving synergies between the UNODC offices in New York and Vienna, and all meetings had been webcast. UNDP and OHCHR had uploaded their documents to the website of the special session. Inter-agency coordination was important and enabled the United Nations system to be as effective and efficient as possible in the face of multifaceted threats.

21. Lastly, UNODC had implemented programmes in Yemen in the past but, unfortunately, it was currently unable to be as active because of the security situation. However, UNODC was prepared to support that country in its efforts to assist victims of human trafficking.

22. **Ms. Maduhu** (United Republic of Tanzania) said that her country was facing a rise in drug abuse and trafficking, which was having a detrimental effect on its security and political stability, and on the public health and economic well-being of its people. Porous borders made the country vulnerable, with heroin and other drugs being consumed from neighbouring countries and from as far afield as Asia and South America. In addition, favourable climate conditions meant that cannabis was grown in many parts of the country.

23. The Government was aware of the close links between drug trafficking and organized crime and had developed a progressive approach involving prevention, raising awareness and drug treatment programmes. An Act of 2014 on drug control and enforcement had established a drug control and enforcement authority empowered to coordinate the fight against substance abuse and illicit trafficking. In addition, the Government was formulating a national drug control policy which would provide guidance on preventing the cultivation and manufacturing of illicit drugs and illicit drug trafficking. It was also carrying out advocacy and awareness-raising activities in schools and other settings to reduce stigma and provide services for people who used drugs. Drug abuse treatment was crucial to enable those dependent on drugs to function successfully in society. With that in mind, the Drug Control Commission and the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare were working together to provide methadone treatment and services for people dependent on drugs through public clinics.

24. Her delegation welcomed the efforts of UNODC to implement knowledge-sharing mechanisms and urged the Office to extend its training programme for professionals working in the field of drug dependence treatment to countries such as her own, which lacked treatment capacities. A global multilevel system of international cooperation was needed and it should be coordinated by the United Nations in the context of the new 2030 Agenda.

25. **Mr. Saikal** (Afghanistan) said that combating opium cultivation, drug trafficking and drug use was a serious challenge for his Government and the international community. More than three decades of conflict and violence, which had originated in foreign aggression and meddling, had severely damaged the physical and economic infrastructure of Afghanistan and had hindered its development. There was a clear link between insecurity and opium cultivation, and drug production and trafficking were significant sources of asset generation for the Taliban. The connection between criminality and terrorism was fuelling the drug trade, which in turn had undermined development, stability and the rule of law in Afghanistan and posed a serious threat to society.

26. The scourge of drug addiction and dependence remained a major challenge that was not only increasingly threatening the health and stability of the Afghan people but was also draining communities of economic and human resources. Afghanistan had one of the highest drug use rates in the world and to tackle that problem the Government had drafted a national drug action plan designed to further good governance, economic development and security and stability. In addition, it had taken steps to eradicate poppy cultivation and opium production in the country, including establishing an anti-narcotics commission, revising the national narcotics strategy, amending legislation, mainstreaming drug issues into public health packages and raising awareness through the education system. As a result, Afghanistan had seen a significant reduction in poppy cultivation and opium production since the launch of the poppy eradication campaign in 2014. The Government had also drafted a new strategy on drug seizures to control the trafficking of drugs into and out of the country, and a regional strategy would soon be shared with regional stakeholders.

27. The drug economy in Afghanistan was a multi-billion dollar business that financed the Taliban and other extremist groups. A comprehensive drug strategy should focus not only on poverty and insurgency but also on tackling the scourge of the black market economy. However, the links between terrorism and the illicit drug trade, and the increase in cases of addiction, were not concerns merely for Afghanistan: its drug economy was part of the global narcotics economy and was fuelled by global demands. That issue thus remained a common and shared

responsibility to be addressed through effective and increased international cooperation.

28. The global drug problem demanded an integrated, multidisciplinary, mutually reinforcing, balanced and comprehensive approach to supply and demand reduction strategies. Hence, increased cooperation between Afghanistan, its neighbours and its international partners was essential for an effective drug eradication strategy, which should take into account existing challenges and regional realities. His delegation therefore urged countries to strengthen their cooperation with Afghanistan to enable it to protect future generations from the threat that narcotics posed to healthy, productive societies.

29. **Ms. Kupradze** (Georgia) said that criminal justice systems were effective only if they ensured accountability for crimes committed, especially violations of human rights and freedoms. Georgia attached particular importance to full implementation of its reporting obligations under the United Nations human rights treaties and was aware that human rights began at home. For that reason the Government was implementing a wide range of reforms to provide better protection of human rights for all citizens by strengthening the rule of law, transparency and accountability. Over the past two decades Georgia had earned a reputation as a State with modern, innovative approaches to good governance and participatory democracy.

30. Given that crime prevention and criminal justice were essential to national stability and democracy, Georgia was constantly strengthening its legal machinery to bring it into line with international standards and was developing preventive mechanisms and working to establish a humane criminal justice system. Georgia had an advanced system of human rights protection comprising multiple institutions and, in 2014, had adopted its first comprehensive human rights strategy with the involvement of civil society and international actors. The Government was continuously enhancing its internal legislative framework and strengthening cooperation on police, customs and civil and criminal law matters.

31. In recent years, a series of institutional reforms had been implemented to liberalize the criminal justice system, including legislative amendments designed to strengthen the institutional independence of the prosecution service and ensure protection of human

rights in criminal proceedings. Progress had also been made with the institutional reform of the judiciary and the national security service, which would allow for a more open system of oversight and scrutiny by both the national legislature and civil society. In addition, secret surveillance operations were now subject to greater judicial review and other due process safeguards.

32. Transnational organized crime and corruption continued to undermine human development and democracy, and Georgia attached the utmost importance to the Doha Declaration adopted at the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. Georgia would work closely with all interested non-governmental organizations to increase their participation in international human rights and crime prevention forums with a view to ensuring a prompt and efficient international response to newly emerging challenges. Georgia was also committed to establishing a new standard of cooperation with all branches of the United Nations human rights machinery and would continue its reforms in the field of criminal justice.

33. **Mr. Mminele** (South Africa) said that while significant progress had been made by some regions in tackling the abuse of illicit drugs and psychotropic substances, the world drug problem continued to affect countries to different extents. In South Africa and other parts of the African continent, drug traffickers were establishing new routes to transport drugs and precursor chemicals.

34. Cannabis remained a major illicit drug of concern in Africa, and its production, trafficking and abuse continued to present significant challenges. South Africa was implementing a cannabis eradication strategy to curtail the illicit market and was aware that a careful balance must be struck between law enforcement measures and illicit crop eradication. At the same time, it was important to promote alternative socioeconomic development to eradicate poverty, create job opportunities and ensure access to adequate housing, health care and education.

35. There had been little change in the overall global situation regarding the production, use and health consequences of illicit drugs. In South Africa, growing abuse of the street drug known as “nyaope” was increasingly overshadowing other illicit substances, while the proliferation of clandestine illicit drug

manufacturing laboratories was another major challenge.

36. The special session of the General Assembly planned for 2016 was an opportunity for the United Nations to review the progress made in the implementation of the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action, and Member States should seize the opportunity to renew their political will and commitment to that agreement in accordance with the three conventions on drugs, which should continue to be at the centre of efforts to address the world drug problem. Any future approach on drugs should not undermine the implementation of the agreed conventions and instruments.

37. South Africa attached great importance to the fight against transnational organized crime, corruption and terrorism, and commended the efforts of UNODC to provide technical assistance to enable Member States to better respond to those growing challenges. Cybercrime remained a growing threat to the international community and his delegation was encouraged that progress was being made in finalizing the translation of the UNODC comprehensive study on cybercrime into all six official languages of the United Nations. Progress must also be made in addressing the scourge of illicit trafficking in endangered species, and the African continent needed support in that regard.

38. Illicit trafficking in illegal mining and in precious and non-ferrous metals remained a major challenge, and South Africa had contributed over \$500,000 to the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute to help efforts in that area. In addition, more should be done to expand access to legal aid in criminal proceedings and to develop national plans in accordance with the United Nations Principles and Guidelines on Access to Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems.

39. His delegation welcomed the discussions on establishing a review mechanism for the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and urged Member States to draw appropriate lessons from the review mechanism of the Convention against Corruption. The scourge of transnational organized crime could be overcome only through international cooperation.

40. Lastly, while his delegation welcomed the extension, until the first half of 2017, of the mandate of the Standing open-ended intergovernmental working

group on improving the governance and financial situation of UNODC, it was concerned by the Office's financial situation. Since a decline in general purpose contributions could affect the implementation of the mandate of UNODC, all Member States and donors should provide financial contributions to its regular budget.

41. **Mr. Harari** (Libya) said that combating human and drug trafficking and corruption was a common and shared responsibility of all Member States and regional and international organizations. The Government of Libya was working to eliminate those scourges and strongly condemned human trafficking, especially the trafficking of women and girls, which was linked to poverty, corruption and a lack of security and stability in many countries.

42. Owing to its geographical location, current situation and huge land area, Libya was faced with problems relating to illegal migration, among other challenges, and it would welcome greater regional and international support so that swift solutions could be found. Help was needed for countries of origin, transit States and the migrants themselves, who faced the danger of death and exploitation when trying to cross borders. His Government would support any proposal that focused on strengthening cooperation and limiting illicit migration while respecting the sovereignty of States and the rights and dignity of migrants.

43. Libya was also facing security issues related to the trafficking of drug and weapons, and those problems could be addressed only through a multilateral approach and with support for national efforts. In March 2012, his country had hosted a regional conference on border security which had resulted in the adoption of the Tripoli Plan of Action on border security. In addition, the Government had established coordination mechanisms to exchange border control experience. Furthermore, in January 2013, a meeting of ministers from Libya, Algeria and Tunisia had been held to promote cooperation on security matters in the Sahel and Sahara region.

44. The Government was also giving priority to eliminating corruption and the diversion of resources, and his delegation urged Member States to strengthen international cooperation in that area and called on financial institutions not to accept funds obtained through money-laundering. Libya had adopted a series of measures to combat corruption in accordance with

the Convention against Corruption and it encouraged all organizations and international financial institutions to coordinate efforts to put an end to corruption and the trafficking of persons, weapons and drugs, all of which affected both individuals and national economies, especially in developing countries.

45. **Ms. Morton** (Australia) said that illicit opium cultivation had increased, trafficking in synthetic drugs was on the rise and new psychoactive substances continued to proliferate at ever faster rates. The high number of people using illicit drugs was placing a heavy burden on public health systems and law enforcement agencies. In Australia, the number of illicit drug seizures and arrests had reached a record high.

46. However, Governments were increasingly recognizing the dangers drugs posed to users, families and communities, and were responding with more determination than ever before. Law enforcement and customs agencies were cooperating more closely to dismantle organized criminal networks that trafficked illicit drugs, and countries were increasingly recognizing that a comprehensive response to tackling the drug problem required an evidence-based approach that focused equally on public health, human rights and law enforcement.

47. The special session of the General Assembly planned for 2016 should result in a high-level outcome document containing recommendations on the priority areas for implementing the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action, as well as emerging drug challenges. Australia was following a balanced approach in tackling crystal methamphetamine, or "ice", which posed the highest risk of all illicit drugs to Australian communities. The Government was developing a national strategy to identify gaps in its responses and was interested to learn from the experiences of other Member States in combating the use and supply of synthetic drugs. More could be done to foster greater cooperation in tackling amphetamine-type stimulants and new psychoactive substances.

48. The current international drug control regime provided sufficient flexibility to enable countries to implement a variety of policies and strategies in order to tackle the world drug problem. However, there was room for more creative thinking on specific issues, such as the global disparity in access to controlled substances for medical purposes. A situation where

17 per cent of the global population consumed 92 per cent of global medical morphine stocks was untenable and more could be done to reduce barriers to accessing controlled drugs. Australia had supported joint programmes for increased access to controlled drugs, implemented by UNODC and WHO in Ghana and Timor-Leste, and firmly believed that complex regulatory and systemic barriers could be overcome with sufficient political will.

49. Lastly, her delegation was strongly opposed to the death penalty, including for drug-related offences. Extensive international research had disproved any suggestion that the death penalty had any deterrent effect on drug-related crime.

50. **Mr. Tituaña Matango** (Ecuador) said that efforts to combat drugs should be based on the implementation of public policies covering education and health which focused on individuals and the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. It was clear that the traditional international strategy had not delivered the expected results and a reform of the current policy was required to tackle the world drug problem.

51. Organized transnational crime, drug trafficking, money-laundering and weapons trafficking all fuelled the drug problem. Although Ecuador was a transit country and not a drug-producing country, it suffered the consequences of the international and regional context, and had high seizure levels. Under the national Constitution, addiction was a public health issue that the Government was tackling through a coordinated and cross-cutting approach. It was imperative to consider the impact of the drug problem on public health and to establish plans and programmes to prevent social harm and provide treatment, protection and rehabilitation for individuals.

52. The international community must reform the way in which it tackled the world drug problem and must go beyond a model focused purely on reducing supply and demand. In addition, countries with high levels of drug use must step up their efforts and fully shoulder their responsibility for perpetuating the problem. New strategies were urgently needed and they should be fairer, more transparent and focused on health and preventing consumption. Prevention and rehabilitation, as well as the regulation and control of activities related to substances subject to control,

should be at the centre of a new body of regulations and rules.

53. The special session of the General Assembly planned for 2016 should be a genuinely open and inclusive discussion that resulted in multidisciplinary approaches involving all United Nations agencies and bodies. The international community must work on the basis of new initiatives and must build a new global strategy to effectively tackle the drug problem. However, that would be possible only when countries moved beyond political will towards a real solution based on the reform of drug policies and an end to policies that persecuted the nations of the South.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.