Madam Chair,

Let me congratulate the chair and bureau upon the election and thank the secretariat for the excellent preparation facilitating our work. The high number of side events adds dynamics and innovation to our work. That is needed when we look at the challenges facing the world when addressing organized crime and crime prevention.

Madam Chair,

As threats are converging, this session comes at an important time. The spread of radicalization and foreign terrorist fighters is a matter of serious concern. We need to develop the right tools in order to address this threat. We must prevent terrorism and violent extremism in all its forms.

Extremist groups cynically use technological platforms to exploit and radicalize vulnerable people. They have become increasingly sophisticated at creating global networks of support online.

Criminals are exploiting vulnerabilities on the internet. Recent attacks are serious, for states, businesses and individuals.

Criminal networks are facilitating and forcing migrants to make dangerous, often lethal journeys across deserts, conflict zones and oceans. Norway strongly supports the enhanced efforts to address trafficking of persons and smuggling of migrants.

Criminal networks drive corruption and fragility and are destroying the environment, making it difficult for states to reach the ambitious goals set out in agenda 2030. We believe that national criminal justice systems should ensure effective, fair and humane procedures, strongly based on the protection of human rights, including the right to a fair trial. Human dignity, democracy, equality, solidarity, the rule of law and human rights are at the core of everything we do. In this regard, Norway is a strong advocate against the death penalty.

Agenda 2030 must guide our work, that includes a commitment to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. Goal 16 asks in particular that by 2030 we significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime.
Madam Chair,

We reaffirm the importance of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and the Protocols thereto as well as the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). We recognize the central work of UNODC to assist Member States in the full and effective implementation of these conventions.

UNTOC and UNCAC provide a basis for international cooperation, especially extradition and mutual legal assistance. However, gaps exist in their implementation by State Parties which hinders international cooperation in the fields of crime prevention and criminal justice.

The risk of progressive infiltration of organized crime into the legal economy is a significant challenge. It needs to be met based on effective and transparent national systems and increased international cooperation.

Prevention and prosecution of money laundering are key tools to impede the infiltration of organised crime in the legal economy, in the financial system and in relevant non-financial businesses and professions.

We need increased efforts to combat the financing of organized crime and terrorism and the links to illicit trade, such as trade in cultural goods and environmental crime. Organized environmental crime, such as wildlife crime and crime in the fishery sector are fuelling conflict and threatening sustainable development.

Madam Chair,

Norway remains strongly committed to a free, open and secure internet respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms. We promote the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime as a framework for international cooperation and we join the broad international consensus on the need to increase our capacity building efforts. We must address the boundless opportunities to order narcotic drugs through the internet and dark net.

We are strongly concerned by the threat to our legal economies, public health and safety posed by the involvement of transnational organized criminal groups in the production and trafficking in counterfeit goods, including chemicals, consumer electronics, agricultural products and in particular of fraudulent medicines.

Madam Chair,

We strongly condemn all acts of violence against women and girls, especially in cases of vulnerability such as armed conflicts, and call upon States to ensure their full protection through their criminal justice systems, observing also UNSC Resolution 1325 and subsequent resolutions on Women, Peace and Security. We strongly condemn all acts of violence, exploitation and abuse against children, and call upon States to tackle them through national juvenile justice policies, including by implementing relevant UN guidance.
Furthermore, we strongly condemn the systematic recruitment and use of children to perpetrate terrorist attacks, as well as the violations and abuses committed by terrorist groups against children. We stress the need to promote specific prevention measures and the urgency to support the rehabilitation and reintegration of children taking into account their specific needs and rights.

Let me underline the crucial role of education and awareness-raising in preventing and countering crime and in the promotion of a culture of lawfulness based on the protection of human rights and the rule of law.

Madam Chair, in closing, the relevance of this Commission is not up for discussion. Indeed, the Commission is key also for the attainment of the SDGs.

Thank you, Madam Chair.