

## **Statement of Norway at the High Level Segment of the 13<sup>th</sup> UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Doha**

**Mr. President,**

**I am pleased to extend our sincere gratitude to the Government for Qatar for hosting the 13<sup>th</sup> UN Crime Congress in this impressive and beautiful venue. We highly appreciate the Qatari hospitality as well as your efforts in preparing and organizing this important conference. Furthermore, let me thank the UNODC for its significant role in the preparations for this Congress and our facilitator ambassador de Alba. We hope and believe that this week's deliberations, informal contacts and side-events will pave the way for a positive and substantial outcome.**

**The issues before us of the utmost importance to people around the world. We must use this opportunity to positively influence the lives of people. This requires: Strengthening international and regional cooperation to combat transnational organized crime; better and more comprehensive crime prevention and criminal justice-policies; full commitment to the rule of law nationally and internationally, prevention of and decisive response to new and emerging forms of transnational crime, and last but not least the promotion of civil society participation in strengthening crime prevention and criminal justice. And all this while at the same time respecting the human rights of our citizens.**

**Transnational organized crime has close links to corruption, terrorism and money laundering, and is a threat to development, peace, security and the rule of law. The transnational criminal networks are innovative and sophisticated and they are involved in all areas with potential for profit; from narcotic drugs and human trafficking to illegal fishing, piracy, illegal logging, and illegal trade in endangered species, cultural properties and environmental waste.**

**Crimes in all forms have an impact on countries', societies' and people's security, they have an impact on the daily life and they have an impact on possibilities for economic and social development. If we succeed in our efforts to combat organized crime, to develop systems and measures for coherent and effective cooperation, to uphold the rule of law and to prevent**

**organized transnational criminal activity, we can truly make a difference. Looking at the increasing challenges from organized crime, we must do more and we must do better.**

**President,**

**We have ample evidence that no country can handle the problem of transnational organized crime alone. We must continue to develop common standards in order to meet the growing challenges. Unfortunately, we are still facing impediments to enhanced coordination and cooperation on crime prevention and criminal justice. Let me mention some such impediments of importance to my government. Firstly, the lack of respect for human rights and international norms and standards; secondly, the practice of capital punishment and thirdly, gender based discrimination, as well as discrimination of minorities and vulnerable groups. We need to address these challenges in a credible and transparent manner.**

**This year we celebrate that it is 60 years since the first UN Crime Congress took place; we also celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Charter of the United Nations. In past decades, we have agreed to a range of international treaties and legally binding documents, also in the area of human rights, reflecting the spirit and wording of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.**

**Today we should remind ourselves that by ratifying the UN Charter, we all have a clear commitment to, and I quote, “*reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights; in the dignity and worth of the human person; in the equal rights of men and women, and of nations large and small; and to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties, and other sources of international law, can be maintained; and to promote social progress, and better standards of life in larger freedom.*”**

**Yet, 70 years after, we are far from respecting these noble objectives. In the framework of justice systems, gross human rights violations are taking place. However, there are also improvements in many parts of the world. Under the auspices of the Human Rights Council, the Universal Periodic Review of all countries human rights performance constitutes one useful arena to address such challenges in a transparent and cooperative manner.**

**Documentation shows that the overwhelming majority of victims of human rights abuses share two common features: Deprivation and discrimination.**

**Poverty, hunger and lack of fundamental economic and social rights. Discrimination based on race or ethnicity, gender, beliefs, sexual orientation, caste or class. Here again, we should remind ourselves that all human beings are born with equal human rights and fundamental freedoms. We believe that by respecting such rights we build fair, confident and resilient societies that pave the way for social and economic development and wellbeing.**

**Mr President,**

**My government strongly opposes the death penalty, and we have limitations in our national law as to how far we can cooperate in the justice area with countries practicing capital punishment. In our view, this irreversible form of punishment is both cruel and inhuman and violates the right to life. Modern justice systems should aspire to more than retribution. There is no convincing evidence supporting the claim that executions deter or prevent crime. On the contrary, research has overwhelmingly demonstrated that there is no scientific ground for claiming that death penalty has a greater deterrent effect than long prison sentences. We urge all countries that have not abolished death penalty to do so. When we meet violence with more violence, when we punish killings with more killings, we move are moving in the wrong direction and away from sustainable solutions to the problems we are facing.**

**There is a clear correlation between criminal justice and development. Later this year, world leaders will meet in New York to adopt a new set of Development Goals. Organized crime, including trafficking of people and drugs, illicit trade in arms and natural resources creates political and economic instability and must be addressed if we are to reach these goals.**

**Transnational Crime is a defining issue of this century for all our countries. Our ability to meet the challenges of old and new forms of organized crime will have a direct bearing on the development of our societies. Let us join forces to meet these challenges together here in Doha. Let us meet them effectively and without compromising the fundamental human right of all our peoples.**