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At the
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Item 106 & 107 "Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice,
International Drug Control"

Dear Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for giving me a chance to talk about our work at UNODC, and our impact on people and countries around the world. Our goal is to prevent and contain the human and social costs of drugs, crime, corruption and terrorism. We do so in ways that benefit millions of human beings, most of them in developing countries, who are trapped in untenable, often tragic situations.

A Comprehensive and Balanced Approach

Some people argue that crime is the cause of poverty: therefore the solution is law enforcement. Others claim that poverty render people vulnerable to crime: in their view, underdevelopment problems should be tackled first, and crime afterwards.

I believe both these arguments are right and wrong at the same time. Why? Because each one only tells half of the story. Poverty and crime must be addressed, not separately, but together and at the same time. Let me explain.

At UNODC we see crime as both the cause and consequence of poverty, insecurity, and underdevelopment. Therefore, while the primary mandate of UNODC is to fight crime, we also have to be ready to act as a catalyst and to motivate development institutions to work with us in synergistic ways. We need a comprehensive, balanced approach that lets everyone work on different fronts with equal force and effectiveness.

When drug cultivation and production are run by armed militias, when crime syndicates trade guns for natural resources, when corrupted officials facilitate the transit of human cargo – in all these cases, the final result can only be more poverty, greater instability and enormous suffering. We've see this clearly in

Central and South America, in Western Asia and in the Golden Triangle, and in many African countries. Even certain regions in Europe are vulnerable to the crime/ poverty trap.

New Operational Focus at UNODC

The first time I addressed this Committee, in the autumn of 2002, I presented a comprehensive programme for the conceptual and operational transformation of UNODC. Our intention was to recast drug and crime policies into a broader development mould, based on the promotion of justice and good governance. Three years ago, we also decided to group drugs, crime, corruption and terrorism under a single operational umbrella.

We wanted to get rid of the notion that illicit drug trends are determined solely by the forces of supply and demand. To a certain extent, of course, they are; but drug cultivation is also about poverty—in the same way that drug abuse is also about HIV/AIDS. Conversely, rural development can be more than a way of supporting farmers' income -- it's also a genuine antidote to drug cultivation. Drug prevention is an important way of containing HIV/AIDS when the infection is a direct consequence of injecting drug use; however, policies to control the pandemic must also take into account the equally compelling need to reduce drug abuse.

We could extend the analysis to many other fields—to human trafficking, for example, a crime that allows traffickers to take advantage of millions of underprivileged, vulnerable people – victims, who are thrown into sweat shops, sex parlours, mine pits, and even sent to the front lines as child soldiers. Yes, in these cases, we have a duty to pursue perpetrators, and to apply the most rigorous of law enforcement measures. But, at the same time, there is also a need to address the root causes of human trafficking. The right of victims to protection and care can best be understood if we recognize that the victims of trafficking also come from underprivileged situations that need redress.

Two years ago, UNODC got rid of the false distinctions that were fracturing our policymaking, and started to address drug prevention and crime control issues in ways that cut across internal jurisdictions within UNODC. Today, we have taken this approach one step further: we are also promoting initiatives that

cut across the portfolios of many other UN agencies and national organizations. After all, aren't the health issues related to drug addiction also a matter of priority for WHO? Aren't the development issues underlying drug cultivation in so many countries also a FAO concern? Isn't the protection of children trafficked for work or pleasure at the heart of UNICEF's work? Isn't integrity in government a priority matter for UNDP, the World Bank, and a variety of ministries in member states? And so on and so forth. Across the world, dozens of organizations are also dealing with issues that concern UNODC, but from their own, very different angles. The key is to harness all these concerns, efforts, and energy in ways that push us forward collectively, toward a common goal: fighting crime, preventing terrorism, and promoting justice for all.

Therefore, my hope today is to convince you that UNODC is a leader, not just in working to eliminate criminal behaviour, *but also in promoting a global alliance toward this end.*

I am also here to issue a call for action—a reminder that *governments, institutions, and individuals need to do more than just voice a political commitment* to drug control and crime prevention. Resolutions here in New York, like the Conventions we brokered in Vienna, are only helpful if they trigger concrete initiatives. I would like to leave this Hall with you, as well as myself, convinced that UNODC, member states and civil organizations do complement one another—that we are all fighting on the front lines, and taking deliberate aim at common threats.

UNODC: Custodian of Drugs, Crime and Corruption Conventions

UNODC is working hard at turning the three United Nations drug Conventions (1961, 1971 and 1988) into domestic policies. UNODC is also the custodian of five important, recent crime instruments: The Convention against Organized Crime, and its three protocols; and the Convention against Corruption.

We have worked hard to help nations embrace these crime Conventions, and we've been successful. I like to say, in fact, that we've managed to score "five out of five"—five instruments in five years, a victory for everyone who believes that strengthening the

rule of law and building strong judicial systems are at the heart of social and economic progress.

The TOC Convention now has 110 ratifications, and next week, at the second session of the Conference of Parties (COP) we expect to see twice the number of parties that attended the first COP last year. All three protocols to the TOC Convention— against trafficking of persons, smuggling of migrants and firearms have now entered into force;

During the GA Summit, Ecuador became the thirtieth party to the Convention against Corruption, which means this instrument will enter into force on 14 December 2005. This Convention Against Corruption represents a real breakthrough because, for the first time, we have a treaty that contains a mechanism for asset recovery. For many countries, where the national wealth was often plundered, the return of stolen funds may mean an unexpected infusion of development funds—a genuine windfall. And again, at UNODC, we have the skills and resources to help countries new to this process.

We've come a long way. We all remember, years ago, when there were questions about whether crime, money laundering, corruption and terrorism really had an international—as opposed to just a domestic dimension—and whether these crimes do, in fact, impact peace, security and development. Today, we have the answer—an unequivocal “yes,” stated loudly and clearly via the swift agreement on the conventions, and their equally swift entry into force.

In Larger Freedom: Crime, Drugs, and Corruption as impediments to Peace and Development

I'm not the first to make connections. They've been voiced on at least two other occasions: by the Secretary General's High-Level Panel, which identified organized crime and terrorism as two of the six interlinked global threats to societies; and by the Secretary-General himself, whose report—“In Larger Freedom”—also focused on these issues. Both documents challenge us to respond with imagination and courage.

I want to thank both the Secretary-General and the High-Level Panel for these contributions. Also deserving of our appreciation are the leaders of your own governments, who firmly pledged to confront these same threats three weeks ago at the Summit. They decided our work at UNODC needs even more support: this is, indeed, welcome recognition that we are on the right track, and that we can get the job done.

UNODC has projects underway on every continent and I would like to take a few moments to describe our work in several theatres.

Crime and Development in Africa

Africa is a continent rich in natural resources. Its people want nothing more than to live in peace and security. Instead, hunger, poverty and illnesses have rendered the region vulnerable to conflict, crime, violence and corruption—maladies that, in turn, perpetrate chronic underdevelopment. As a result, citizens live in despair and fear, without justice or hope. This has to change.

UNODC recently issued a report on Crime and Development in Africa. It provides hard evidence that Africa is a target for organized crime, which now transships a significant amount of Colombian cocaine and Afghan heroin through the continent to avoid detection. The Report shows that Africa is also the target of criminal gangs that frequently exploit post-conflict situations – creating an environment that is also prone to conventional crime and urban violence.

To make things even worse, across the continent, the capability of Africa's police force is extremely low, and its judicial systems are dangerously weak. How can Africa fight crime, if its police force is spread too thin, if its judicial systems are inadequate, if there are not enough prosecutors or defenders to take on cases, few courts in which to hold trials, and only under-equipped jails for convicted criminals? The weakness of the judicial systems is itself an enticement to crime—an invitation for criminals to act with absolute impunity.

The UNODC report also documents corruption across Africa, and describes what many African governments are doing to control it. In this context, let me express appreciation to Nigeria's President Obasanjo who has demonstrated strong support for this

UNODC initiative. Not surprisingly, his government has been going after corrupt officials for several years now, trying to retrieve the huge assets stolen by earlier leaders from the public coffers.

The UNODC Report also offers us evidence that crime and corruption translate directly into suffering, waste and inequalities. They generate huge collateral damage as well, blocking foreign and domestic investment. Today, in places where we should be seeing a rush to invest in Africa's resources, we see instead the highest rate of capital flight in the world. In an environment where citizens struggle to keep their own savings away from corrupt officials, it is unrealistic to expect that development aid will reach its intended beneficiaries intact.

UNODC knows how to help nations rebuild their judicial systems. We possess a proven expertise in strengthening the rule of law. Thanks to the findings of this Report, we can now bring these skills to Africa, and generate support from other institutions for Africa. The road map for the delivery of such an assistance is contained in a Programme of Action endorsed last month at a Round Table in Nigeria -- a meeting attended by 47 African Ministers and crime experts, funding partners and civil society organizations.

The Programme of Action, developed by African experts in partnership with UNODC, has clear benchmarks and a 5-year deadline. We believe this Programme is critical to development in Africa but, again, it will not happen by itself.

First, we need a decision on the part of all the African Governments and involved institutions to integrate the elements of the Programme into their national development strategies.

Second, we need to remind funding partners, including aid agencies and financial institutions, to set aside ODA and loans for projects designed to strengthen rule of law across Africa. Directing resources toward this end is just as important as providing resources for roads, power plants and other infrastructure projects.

Third, my Office, in partnership with Member States, is ready to direct increased investments toward Africa—resources intended, again, to shore up the continent's judicial systems. With the generous support of several major donors, UNODC is already

providing technical assistance in border control, security reform and counter-narcotics.

Today, I also want to share some breaking news with you—thanks to funding provided by the European Union, UNODC is presently engaged in the development of a \$32 million project to fight corruption and financial crimes in Nigeria. A multi-million dollar programme is also being launched in Cape Verde.

Drugs, Crime and Violence: from the Americas to Asia

Other continents are equally affected by drugs, crime, corruption and terrorists-related violence, even distant places like the Americas and Asia.

(a) Colombia has suffered greatly from the evil alliance between drug traffickers and guerrillas. To its credit, Colombia has worked aggressively to counter drug production and insurgency by combining interdiction efforts—the spraying and eradication of crops—with sustainable livelihood schemes. UNODC has helped Colombia quite a bit, especially in the area of alternative development, and as an advocate for a balanced, long-term approach to eliminating drug cultivation.

The results? Our most recent survey indicates a 50% decline in coca cultivation since 2000. The less welcome news is that despite this reduction, Colombia continues to be the world's number one producer of coca, accounting for more than half of the world supply.

Some of Colombia's neighbours, as well as more distant nations in the Caribbean and in Central America, are also caught in the nexus between crime, corruption, money-laundering and drug trafficking – and as a result, they too face urban violence, rural poverty, and the dilemmas posed by families running away from conflict, and disappearing into a growing crowd of displaced people. The scope, nature and complexity of the Andean problems demand increased support from the international community.

(b) Afghanistan remains another significant challenge, both in terms of counter-narcotic activities, and in alleviating the suffering of a population emerging from a quarter century of wars.

Recently UNODC released the 2005 Afghan opium cultivation Survey: the message was mixed. First, there were some good news—a significant decline by 21 per cent of opium cultivation; fewer households involved in the production; and lower revenues from narcotics.

This decline in cultivation broke a four-year growth trend. It also suggests current drug control policies have worked, at least in 2005, when farmers feared that illegal drug crops would be destroyed if discovered; low farm-gate prices continued to work as a disincentive for farmers, and the availability of alternative livelihood programmes offered growers an unprecedented opportunity to enter the legal economy. Indeed, this is one the most important lessons to come out of Afghanistan in 2005—in every region where cultivation declined significantly, alternative development was available.

The situation in Afghanistan, however, defies a narrow view of the drug problem. It cries out for more comprehensive solutions, ranging from improved governance, to greater security, to better ways to neutralize illegal militias.

Corruption is behind increased cultivation in some parts of Afghanistan. In 2005, cultivation shifted to northern and western Afghanistan, allowing traffickers better opportunities to move the drug across the nation's western borders. The pooling of the opium industry in these regions tells us that a number of players in these border provinces -- provincial governors, local officials, customs officers, insurgents -- benefit from the drug economy, now half the size of Afghanistan's licit GNP.

As a result, we believe, again, that a balanced, comprehensive approach is key in Afghanistan, and that the international community must be willing to wage a simultaneous campaign on a number of different fronts. In each of these areas, UNODC is able to bring its experience to bear, and indeed, one only has to look at how we have assisted other countries—in the Golden Triangle, for example -- to realize that no matter how serious the situation is, there are remedies.

We know that many of Afghanistan's problems are spreading to neighbouring countries and nations with the bad luck to be intersected by international trafficking routes. Our solution in these cases is to build on the achievements we have realized through

the Paris Pact, an initiative designed to strengthen border security and law enforcement activities in the countries that lay between drug producing regions and the big drug hubs, the final destinations for heroin, in Europe and Russia.

We've helped strengthen border control on the Tajik-Afghan border and in Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan; in Iran, and in South Eastern Europe. And that's not all. We also want to begin focusing on the movement of precursor chemicals—millions of tons are flowing across Europe, and Asia—and so far, we have managed to monitor the movement of only a small percentage. This is a fertile area for future research and technical assistance.

Indeed, the Russian Federation has already expressed interest in hosting a Paris II Ministerial Conference next year; the aim would be to broaden the scope of the Paris Pact in ways that would allow States to combat terrorist financing, money laundering, crime and corruption in even more strenuous ways.

Bangkok Crime Congress

Before I conclude these remarks, I want to mention the 11th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Bangkok: a model of efficiency in organization, and serious deliberation. These Crime Congresses, held every five years since 1955 in different parts of the world, are unique events in the larger galaxy of United Nations meetings. They are attended not only by Delegates and government representatives, but also by NGOs, academics and a wide array of advocates—for the rights of victims, the welfare of prisoners, the promotion of integrity in the judiciary, and like causes.

The 2005 Crime Congress ended with the adoption of the Bangkok Declaration. In it, Member States first reaffirmed the importance of implementing existing international instruments against organized crime, corruption, drugs and terrorism. Then, governments committed themselves to future cooperation in the fight against cyber-crime, money laundering, and trafficking in cultural property.

These same countries also pledged to work together on extradition, mutual legal assistance, and the confiscation, recovery and return of the proceeds of crime. They cited the need to fight

computer-related crime. I wish to thank the government of Thailand for its extraordinary generosity in hosting the Congress.

UNODC: Future Goals

Mr. Chairman,

UNODC continues to reach out to Member States with unique and customized assistance. We continue to lead the way in the promotion of justice for all, and in support for the rule of law. Our approach is active, balanced, and well tailored.

Now that we do have a strong legislative framework in place, 5 crime instruments in 5 years, UNODC intends to strengthen its work in accordance with the wishes expressed at the recent GA Summit.

We believe the quality of our research efforts—already very high—will benefit even more from a sharper focus on specific regions; this was our approach to developing the Report on Crime and Development in Africa. The vicious cycle I've described, the underlying dynamic that continues to feed so many threats, is real: first, poverty begets crime; second, crime results in more poverty; and finally, increasing poverty lead to even more crime.

At UNODC, we want to explain why it is so critical to break this cycle, and how to do it. In the next several months we intend to do a similar study for Caribbean and Central America. We also plan to release the first report on trafficking in persons sometime in the near future.

UNODC's field operations continue to focus on such key areas as alternative livelihoods, drug abuse prevention and related HIV/AIDS, drug interdiction and border control, countering trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants, improving the performance of criminal justice systems, strengthening the capacity of States to fight corruption and money laundering, and promoting reform in relation to specific issues, such as the special needs of women and children.

We are also interested in promoting a stronger partnership with UN Peacekeeping Operations—an initiative meant to

construct links between peacekeeping and the reconstruction of the rule of law in post-conflict situations.

Our Terrorism Prevention Branch continues to lay down important groundwork for States where drugs and terrorism work hand-in-hand. UNODC has helped governments understand how various UN instruments permit them to “seize and freeze” money that might otherwise flow to the Taliban, al Qaeda, or regional insurgents. Now, UNODC is working to help countries understand what it takes to comply with the newly-adopted international Convention on the Suppression of Nuclear Terrorism.

In each of our project areas, the work of UNODC is meeting and even exceeding the expectations of our stakeholders. Indeed, voluntary contributions are surging, a reflection I believe, of the growing regard Member States have for our work.

I wish I could tell you UNODC has all the resources we actually require. Unfortunately, it doesn't. We still need funds to support our small infrastructure, and additional resources from the regular budget—something the leaders of your nations have already told us they support. Please express our appreciation to them again when you return home.

Although increased resources are clearly a sign of confidence in UNODC, the fact is that we will not, and cannot succeed, unless our efforts are better aligned with the needs of assisted countries, as well as the visions of international lenders and donors. UNODC wants to sit down with recipient countries as well as with the people in a position to fund these needs, so that, by working together, we can bring real benefits to communities where the criminal behaviour of a few people is causing suffering for millions.

We know that developed countries spend roughly, and on average, about 1.7% of their Governments' annual budget on the justice system. We estimate that only half that percentage (about 0.8%) of total ODA is devoted to those sectors on a yearly basis. Is it unrealistic to ask funding partners—via aid loans and grants—to double the proportion of resources allocated to criminal justice projects in their development assistance, so that justice systems in developing countries can rise to the same standards expected and enjoyed by rich nations?

Shouldn't we encourage development assistance institutions, who are ready with resources for infrastructure, to absorb the cost of security and strong judiciaries as well?

These are not abstract challenges. They are inquiries about the best ways to accomplish shared goals. And they deserve serious, thoughtful deliberation.

Let me conclude by thanking you again for your attention.