

**Remarks by H.E. Mr. Munir Akram,
President of the Economic and Social Council,
at the 30th Anniversary Session of Commission
on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice**

17 May 2021, 9 AM (Vienna time)

**Honourable Ministers,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is a pleasure to join you today to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ).

2. As one of the main functional commissions of the ECOSOC, the CCPCJ plays an important role in the United Nations system. It has strengthened the international normative framework on crime prevention and also addressed destabilizing effects of crime and thus assists Member States in promoting sustainable development goals.

3. I am very pleased to learn that this anniversary session of the Commission is expected to endorse the outcome of the recently concluded UN Crime Congress and the Kyoto Declaration. Endorsement of this political declaration will certainly contribute to strengthening our efforts in advancing crime prevention, rule of law and the timely achievement of SDGs.

Excellencies,

4. While we should celebrate this special occasion and acknowledge our collective accomplishments of last 30 years, it is also a time to reflect on what still needs to be done.

5. There can be no sustainable development without justice, rule of law and prevention and control of crime as reflected in SDG-16.

6. An effective criminal justice response provides nations with an enabling framework for economic and social interaction, for business investment in

a climate of mutual trust and confidence. Such a climate of confidence and trust is indispensable for growth and balanced socio-economic development.

7. Unfortunately, organized crime, corruption and illicit financial flows continue to pose a chronic and ubiquitous challenge for many developed and developing countries.

8. The COVID-19 pandemic has had particularly deleterious impact on crime prevention and criminal justice. Lockdowns enabled new illicit markets to thrive, presenting unique challenges to policing and preventing crime and ensuring justice.

9. Enhanced international action is essential to combat and dismantle the networks and platforms that perpetrate these crimes and undermine progress towards 2030 Agenda.

10. In line with my recommendations to the UN Crime Congress, I hope that the CCPCJ will prioritize certain key issues:

First, an urgent halt to the outflow of massive resources from developing countries through illicit financial flows. This bleeding of the developing countries is nothing short of criminal, especially when developing countries, stripped of revenues, are struggling to find the fiscal space to fight the Pandemic and achieve the SDGs.

There is a need to build synergies between the work of CCPCJ and the UN Convention against Corruption to further strengthen international cooperation particularly on return of stolen assets.

Second, in the context of Covid-19, there is need for effective action against falsified and fake medical products (such as Covid-19

vaccines) and to strengthen international cooperation.

Third, environmental crimes and ever-growing illegal trade in wildlife – which could lead to other zoonotic diseases – must be dealt on priority.

Fourth, the CCPCJ should promote change in labor and migration laws as an effective means for dealing with human smuggling and human trafficking. Opening up additional avenues for legal migration is central to reducing the demand for such smuggling services and to meet the migration related SDGs.

Excellencies,

11. This year's High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development will focus on sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19

pandemic, and I appreciate that the CCPCJ has already provided a substantive contribution to enrich our discussions.

12. The work of the Commission is more pertinent than ever, with advancing crime prevention and criminal justice as the key to a fairer COVID-19 response, and a critical factor to recover better from the crisis and timely achievement of 2030 Agenda.

13. As was the case 30 years ago, when the Commission was established, we need to continue to work together and strengthen coordination and cooperation to effectively address the challenges of our time.

I thank you
