

**Remarks of the UNODC Executive Director  
Opening of the 30th session CCPCJ  
Monday, 17 May 2021**

**Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,  
Colleagues,**

**Good morning and thank you for joining us for the start of the 30th session.**

**I would first like to welcome our very distinguished guests, Minister Zadic, Minister Cartabia, High Commissioner Bachelet, and Ms. Alvazzi, the Chair of the Alliance of NGOs.**

**It is an honour to share this podium with you, our Member States, our sister UN entities, and our civil society partners, as we mark 30 years of this Commission.**

**I would also like to congratulate the Chair, Ambassador Cortese. You can count on UNODC's support.**

**For 30 years, the Crime Commission has promoted international cooperation for more effective crime prevention and criminal justice responses, and now the CCPCJ will help to chart a path forward as we face unprecedented challenges in this unprecedented time.**

**This year, the Commission follows the 14th Crime Congress. A forward-looking declaration was negotiated through this Commission and adopted in Kyoto, and its implementation will be advanced here this week.**

**The Kyoto Declaration promotes the integrated responses the world needs to tackle increasingly transnational, organized and complex forms of crime, while promoting equal access to justice, safeguarding children and victims' rights, mainstreaming gender, and empowering youth.**

**UNODC has already begun work to support implementation of the Declaration through our global programmes and field network, and our new strategy for 2021 to 2025 will also assist Member States in taking forward these commitments.**

**The 85 virtual side events this week further highlight measures that can help operationalize the Kyoto Declaration. This includes the newly adopted UN Common Position on Incarceration, which UNODC is honoured to introduce, together with the Co-Chairs of the Nelson Mandela Group of Friends, as well as OHCHR and the DPO Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions, at an event this afternoon.**

**The Common Position is an important step forward, signifying our commitment to finding ways to meet the acute needs surrounding incarceration, as a shared priority across the UN system, in the COVID crisis and beyond.**

**Violence against women has become a greater threat in the pandemic, and I am honoured to be joining Minister Zadic and other distinguished speakers at an event later today on how we can strengthen responses to domestic violence.**

**At other events this week, UNODC will be sharing a new toolkit to support development of national and regional strategies to counter organized crime.**

**We will address challenges in handling cross-border electronic evidence and countering the use of the internet for terrorist purposes, and promote public-private partnerships in addressing cybercrime.**

**I am also proud that we will be launching at this Commission the first Observatory on Smuggling of Migrants, a new interactive website that provides up-to-date and policy-relevant information and analysis, with the aim of supporting Member States to better protect the human rights of smuggled migrants, and counter this crime.**

**Smuggling of migrants is the thematic focus of the 30th session. This is a timely discussion as the COVID crisis has not stopped this crime.**

**In fact, UNODC data on the three major Mediterranean migrant smuggling routes show that flows to Europe continued throughout the pandemic, and have even increased in 2021.**

**Already at terrible risk of violence, abuse and even death, smuggled migrants face situations of increased vulnerability in the pandemic.**

**This session can help to increase protection for smuggled migrants and improve responses, including through the draft resolution which has been tabled this week, along with six other resolutions addressing shared challenges.**

**Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,**

**I am deeply grateful that we can be together today, while maintaining all necessary safety and distancing measures, with over 90 percent of the more than 1,000 participants, from over 100 countries, taking part virtually.**

**I am very proud of our UNOV/UNODC staff, who have worked under uniquely challenging circumstances to assist our Member States in advancing the intergovernmental dialogue.**

**Together, and with the support of our host country, we have kept our colleagues and visitors safe, even while we have kept delivering essential support to the people we serve, and who need the UN now more than ever.**

**The COVID-19 crisis has worsened existing inequalities and gaps in social protection, leaving our societies, and their most vulnerable members, facing greater threats of crime and exploitation. Divergent recoveries will leave more people behind and leave them at risk.**

**Action through this Commission for more inclusive and integrated justice responses is needed to strengthen prevention and the rule of law, and to help break vicious cycles of inequality, corruption, crime, and violence.**

**The pandemic has put our solidarity to the test. This week is an opportunity to demonstrate once again that the Vienna spirit can triumph over any obstacle or difference of perspective; and that our commitment to shared responsibility, greater inclusion, and justice for all remains unwavering.**

**I wish you successful deliberations.**

**Thank you.**