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MALTA NATIONAL STATEMENT
30TH CCPCJ SESSION
17 – 21 May 2021

delivered by

H.E. NATASHA MELI DAUDEY

Permanent Representative of Malta to the UN and International Organizations based in
Vienna

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

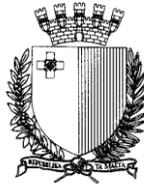
Mr Chair allow to start by congratulating you on your appointment as Chair. You can rest assured of my delegation's full support

Malta fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Minister of Portugal on behalf of the European Union. I'd like to make a few remarks in my national capacity.

As we celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the Commission, this year has indeed been a productive one for the work of the CCPCJ, culminating in the successful Crime Congress held in Kyoto, Japan earlier this year. We now very much look forward to the UNGASS on Corruption in June and we also look forward to build on the existing frameworks for international cooperation on combatting cybercrime.

On the theme of this year's Commission; 20 years after the adoption of the UNTOC and its Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants, organised criminal smuggling networks continue to perpetrate despicable crimes, finding innovative ways to circumvent law-enforcement.

People smuggling is based on highly profitable business models that tend to thrive, rather than suffer in times of crises. The COVID-19 pandemic was yet another sad proof of this. Thanks to their ability to react and adapt swiftly, the smugglers were capable to respond to the increased demands of the migrants. In fact, by the end of April, the total number of irregular crossings to Europe along the Central Mediterranean Route presented a 95% increase when compared to the same period last year. Due to heavier restrictions their methods became riskier and more dangerous, exposing the migrants to further and increased levels of violence, abuse, and at times even trafficking.



Let's be clear, smugglers are criminals who take advantage of the most vulnerable – those escaping all kinds of hardships, hoping for a better future. Women, girls as well as children become even more vulnerable in these situations.

The significant increase registered in unaccompanied migrant children is shocking. According to UNICEF, out of the 33,200 children that arrived in Southern Europe in 2019, 27% were unaccompanied or ended up separated from their families along the journey. Unfortunately, many of these children end up disappearing, possibly because they end up victims of even deeper organised crime. We cannot remain numb in front of this reality or rather catastrophe. We have a collective responsibility to protect everyone's human rights, but we have an even greater responsibility to protect the rights of vulnerable children.

This is why Malta with the support of ICMPD, International Organisation on Migration (IOM) and the Global Initiative, decided to organise a side event, this Wednesday, to raise awareness, and to explore effective measures that could be taken to protect the rights of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers.

Mr Chair,

Only a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach can help us better address and counter this growing challenge.

1. First we need to ensure that the perpetrators get punished for their crimes. This will require increased and improved regional and international cooperation of law enforcement agencies.
2. Secondly, addressing the crime is important but is not enough. It will be impossible to eradicate the supply if the demand by migrants remains. It is therefore imperative to address the root causes of migration. Many turn to smugglers due to declining social and economic conditions, and at times to escape conflict or persecution. Improved conditions in the countries of origin will give less reasons to embark on such perilous journeys.
3. Thirdly, opportunities for legal migration must be increased. This should also be complemented with increased cooperation between countries of origin and those of destination including on the facilitation of the return of those who either arrive irregularly or who do not qualify for asylum or protection. Failure to have such solid cooperation only plays in the hands of the smugglers, proving the effectiveness of the criminal services they provide.

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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA
TO THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
VIENNA

Mr Chair,

In conclusion, if we want to reverse the current trend, and be ourselves one step ahead of the criminal networks, while effectively protecting the rights of the smuggled migrants, we must intensify multilateral and inter-institutional cooperation. No country will manage on its own.