

STATEMENT OF TURKEY
30th Session of the CCPCJ
(Vienna, 17-21 May 2021)

Mr. Chairman,

I congratulate you, Excellency, for your election to chairmanship of the thirtieth session of the Commission. We also thank the UNODC Secretariat for their efforts in organizing this event.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates,

Transnational organized crime and terrorism are challenges of major importance to peace, security and development of our societies. Turkey fully supports international cooperation in this regard and we take all necessary measures for combatting and preventing them.

Therefore, we support the work of the Commission, which is a unique forum for the member states for exchanging views, sharing experiences, identifying the emerging crime trends and appropriate criminal justice responses.

Mr. Chairman,

There is no doubt that there are growing links between transnational organized crime and terrorism. This relation was clearly acknowledged in the UN General Assembly Resolutions. Turkey witnesses these linkages on a regular basis.

On this important occasion I have five messages to share with this distinguished audience.

First, we are fighting against several terrorist organizations, such as DEASH, PKK/PYD/YPG and Fetullah Gülen Terrorist Organization-FETÖ. Every day Turkish authorities find evidence that these organizations finance their activities mostly through organized crime, such as drug trafficking, trafficking in persons and firearms trafficking.

Moreover, as the failed coup attempt perpetrated by FETÖ in 2016 to overthrow the democratically elected government and the constitutional order in Turkey demonstrated us, these groups do not refrain from employing any corrupt means to infiltrate clandestinely and in an organized manner within the State.

Turkey will continue its struggle against these terrorist organizations, including their supporters in different countries, under different banners. We invite our partners to never forget that terrorism and organized crime are worldwide phenomenon and we can combat them only with common understanding and genuine cooperation. We would like to count on the solidarity of the international community.

Second, another growing threat is the issue of Foreign Terrorist Fighters. In line with international obligations, all states should bear the responsibility of their own citizens for the investigations and prosecutions of FTFs. Turkey is attaching utmost importance to capturing FTFs in its territory and prosecuting them depending on the availability of evidences or sending them back to their countries of origin for their prosecutions. We will continue deportation of FTFs. We call on all our partners to assume their responsibilities.

Third, the number of people fleeing from violence or instability has reached an unprecedented level. Today, Turkey is the largest refugee hosting country in the world. We are home to around 4 million refugees, including more than 3,8 million Syrians.

We continue to combat irregular migration as well as transnational crimes including migrant smuggling and human trafficking, that are often brought along with such migratory flows. However, our unilateral efforts are not sufficient to cope with this global problem. Turkish authorities also closely cooperate with civil society to help and protect the victims. We stand ready to share our experience with other parties.

Today, it has become clear than ever that closing the borders and building fences or pushing-back the migrants and refugees do not control migratory flows or smuggling networks. But they result with humanitarian tragedies. These practices are not only a breach of international obligations and human rights, but also constitute crime, resulting with deaths and casualties of migrants, who are

mostly women and children. We should focus on addressing the root causes triggering migration in the source countries. This way, we could help to the safe and voluntary return of migrants and refugees. In this context, we call again to all our partners to take their responsibilities and encourage them to share this burden fairly.

Fourth, in order to decrease the crime rates and enhance social integration and the rule of law, we should give priority to eliminate racism, xenophobia, Islamophobia and discrimination. Only this way our world may become safer.

Mr. Chairman,

I want to underline that, Turkey will continue its efforts in combatting all types of crimes and terrorism. We must never forget, if one member of the international community fails in this struggle, we suffer from its negative effects altogether. We will continue to deploy our efforts in the fight against crimes and terrorism and we expect all our partners to do the same.

Fifth and last, I would like to underline that in light of the recent events, we strongly condemn the air strikes launched by Israel on the Gaza Strip that resulted in death of many innocent people, including women and children.

Israel, which tried to expel the Palestinian people from their lands in East Jerusalem and the West Bank during the holy month of Ramadan and held operations against the Palestinians who wanted to worship in al-Aqsa Mosque, has the main responsibility for the escalation of the events in the Palestinian territories. This is the basic reality which cannot be denied.

The rapid increase in civilian casualties in Israeli air strikes on Gaza, the damage to the schools and the injury of journalists are clear manifestations of the disproportionate and indiscriminate nature of the Israeli attacks. It is also a source of concern for us that Israel has started tank and artillery fires against Gaza.

It is clear that Israel's aggressive and provocative policies will not contribute to the efforts towards ending violence and prevailing dialogue and reconciliation in the Middle East. We call on the international community to intervene swiftly and efficiently for Israel to stop these attacks which will cause further loss of civilian lives. The only way to prevent such violence in the occupied territories is to hold Israel responsible for its actions in the international fora.

17.05.2021

My country clearly expressed its views through high level national statements and also through the documents adopted at the Executive Committee meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation held on 16 May at the level of Foreign Ministers.

Thank you.