

Statement of the Asia-Pacific Group
At the 30th Session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ)
Vienna, 17-21 May 2021

To be delivered on behalf of the Asia-Pacific Group by H.E. Manizha Bakhtari, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, and the Incumbent Chair of the Asia-Pacific Group in Vienna

Mr. Chairman,

[Introduction]

1. I have the honor to make this statement on behalf of the Asia and Pacific Group. At the outset, I would like to congratulate H.E. Ambassador Mr. Alessandro Cortese of Italy and other members of the Bureau on their election. I would also like to sincerely thank the Secretariat for their tireless efforts in organizing this session and preparing the documents before us.
2. The Group wishes to express its appreciation to the Government of Japan and the Secretariat for the excellent organization of the 14th UN Crime Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. We thank in particular H.E. Ambassador Takeshi Hikihara and his team for their exemplary work on the Kyoto Political Declaration. The Group fully supports the Declaration and appreciates all efforts towards its implementation.

Mr. Chairman,

[General Principles]

3. The Group shares the view that promoting the rule of law at all levels and sustainable development are strongly interrelated and mutually reinforcing with crime prevention and criminal justice. In this regard, the Group underlines the importance of the CCPCJ in promoting especially goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
4. The Group highly appreciates the work of the UNODC in taking on the leading role within the United Nations system and requests the UNODC to continue assisting Member States, including capacity building and technical assistance.

Mr. Chairman,

[UNTOC – Transnational Organized Crime]

5. The Group views the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime as an important instrument to counter transnational organized crime and strengthen international cooperation.

6. The Group appreciates the demonstrated international community's unified commitment to combat transnational organized crime through the adoption and establishment of a Mechanism for the Review of the Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, which serves as an important guiding tool on the need for further action.

Mr. Chairman,

[UNCAC - Corruption]

7. The Group views the United Nations Convention against Corruption as the core international legal framework to prevent and combat corruption. The Group welcomes the progress made so far in the reviews of implementation and continues to support its work. We welcome the conclusion of the negotiation of the political declaration for the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Corruption and now look forward to the upcoming Special Session.
8. The Group also emphasizes the need to continue to prevent and combat corruption and illicit financial flows as well as strengthening international cooperation for the recovery of illicitly acquired assets and its speedy return to the country of origin, in accordance with Chapter 5 of the UNCAC and domestic legal frameworks.
9. The Group urges all States parties, within the framework of the UNCAC, and in accordance with domestic legislation, to take concrete measures and to strengthen cooperation to hold any person who has committed or is liable for an act of corruption accountable and recover the proceeds of crime by denying safe haven to such persons and the proceeds of their crimes.

[TIP]

10. The Group underscores the value to implement a victim-oriented approach to prevent and counter all forms of trafficking in persons for the purpose of any form of exploitation. The demand aspect, the root causes, prevention, and law enforcement as well as assistance to victims should be at the core of any strategy to combat trafficking in persons.

[SOM]

11. The Group remains concerned regarding the violation of the rights of smuggled migrants. In this regard, the Group underscored the need to adopt and implement effective measures to prevent and combat the smuggling of migrants and protect the lives and the human rights of migrants, particularly of women, unaccompanied children and adolescents. In particular, we reiterate the importance to tackle the increasing role of transnational and national organized criminal groups profiting from such crime and other crimes against migrants.

Mr. Chairman,

[Terrorism]

12. The Group recognizes that terrorism remains one of the most serious threats to international peace and security and reiterates its strong and unequivocal condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, regardless of nationality, ethnicity, or religious beliefs. The Group underscores the need to implement international instruments and relevant United Nations resolutions to counter terrorism in accordance with domestic laws.
13. We deplore the rise of hate crimes around the world and in this regard underline the importance of respect for religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity and therefore call for all States to promote a culture of tolerance and respect among individuals, societies and nations.

[Cybercrime]

14. The Group reaffirms its firm support to the elaboration of a comprehensive international convention on countering the use of information and communications technologies for criminal purpose in accordance with UNGA Resolution 74/247. In this regard, the Group welcomes the convening of the organizational session of the Ad Hoc Committee established pursuant to the above-mentioned Resolution and calls upon all Member States to actively participate in the future work of the Ad Hoc Committee with the aim of negotiating a global instrument on combating cybercrime through an inclusive, transparent and cooperative process.
15. We remain strongly convinced that upholding multilateralism, including supporting an effective United Nations development system and ensuring restrictive measures and actions towards developing countries are fully in accordance with the international law and Charter of the United Nations, so as to avoid any detrimental effects on their crime prevention and criminal justice efforts, are essential to improve solidarity, international cooperation framework and reinforce States' capabilities on crime prevention and criminal justice matters.

[FINGOV]

16. The Group emphasizes the need to strengthen and take full advantage of the role of the open ended intergovernmental working group on improving the governance and financial situation of the UNODC (FINGOV) and urges UNODC to take concrete steps to improve gender balance and representation of unrepresented and underrepresented countries in the staff composition of its Office.

I thank you, Chair.
