

**Draft/Final Statement of the Asia-Pacific Group
At the 31st Session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ)
Vienna, 16-20 May 2022**

To be delivered on behalf of the Asia-Pacific Group by H.E. Jaideep Mazumdar, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of India, and the Incumbent Chair of the Asia-Pacific Group in Vienna

Mr. Chairperson,

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[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 Hikiyama Takeshi of Japan 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.

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Mr. Chairperson,

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[General Principles]

2. 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.

3. 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 through capacity building and technical assistance.

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Mr. Chairperson,

[Kyoto Declaration]

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4. The Group emphasizes the importance of the Kyoto Declaration on Advancing Crime Prevention, Criminal Justice and the Rule of Law: Towards the Achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which was adopted at the 14th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and is fully committed to implementing the Declaration.

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[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 and its Protocols, which serves as an important guiding tool on the need for further action.

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Mr. Chairperson,

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[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 adoption of the political declaration "our common commitment to effectively addressing challenges and implementing measures to prevent and combat corruption and strengthen international cooperation" at the UNGA special session held from 2 to 4 June 2021 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

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 of implementing 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 underscores 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 of tackling the increasing role of transnational and national organized criminal groups profiting from such crime and other crimes against migrants.

Mr. Chairperson,

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[Terrorism]

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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.

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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.

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[Cybercrime]

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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 organisation of the first session of the Ad Hoc Committee at UN HQ in New York from 28 February to 11 March 2022. The Group also calls upon all Member States to actively participate in the forthcoming session of the Ad Hoc Committee from 30 May to 10 June 2022 here in Vienna and its future work with the aim of negotiating a global instrument on combating cybercrime through an inclusive, transparent and cooperative process.

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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 to reinforce States' capabilities on crime prevention and criminal justice matters.

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[FINGOV]

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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.

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I thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

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