

STATEMENT OF TÜRKİYE
31st Session of the CCPCJ
(Vienna, 16-20 May 2022)

Mr. Chairman,

I congratulate you, Excellency, for your election to chairmanship of the thirty first 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. We support the work of the Commission, which is a unique forum for the Member States. In this sense, I congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, once again, for the successful conduct of the Kyoto Crime Congress we held last year in Japan.

Mr. Chairman,

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

First, 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. Türkiye witnesses these linkages on a regular basis. We have to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, wherever and by whomsoever committed, as our countries also committed themselves in the Kyoto Declaration.

Türkiye is fighting against several terrorist organizations, such as DEASH, PKK/PYD/YPG and Fetullah Gülen Terrorist Organization-FETO. 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.

Türkiye will continue its struggle against these terrorist organizations, including their supporters in different countries, under different banners. We want to count on the genuine solidarity of the international community.

Second, the number of people fleeing from violence or instability has reached an unprecedented level. Today, Türkiye is the largest refugee hosting country in the world. We are home to more than 4 million refugees, including 3,75 million Syrians.

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

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.

The latest example of such incidents occurred on 2 February 2022 at the land border of an EU member State where Turkish authorities found 11 dead migrants who had been pushed back and left to freeze to death. The deceased migrants had been stripped of their shoes and clothes, despite harsh winter conditions in the area. One migrant died in hospital after being rescued by Turkish authorities. Tragically, the bodies of additional seven dead migrants were discovered the following day at the same border, bringing the total number of lives lost to 19.

These practices are not only a breach of international obligations and human rights, but also constitute crime. In this context, we call again to all our partners to take their responsibilities and we encourage them to share this burden fairly, without any discrimination based on the origin of the migrants.

Third, 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.

To conclude, it is clear that individual efforts of countries against organized crime and terrorism will not be sufficient. We need full cooperation, but more importantly, we need genuine cooperation in this struggle.

Thank you.