

32nd session of the CCPCJ. Agenda Item 3 – General debate. Statement by ITALY, delivered by Amb. Alessandro Cortese

Madam Chair, Mister President, Excellencies, distinguished Delegates,

Italy fully aligns itself with the statement of the European Union and reiterates in particular its strong condemnation to the criminal war of aggression launched by Russia against Ukraine. In addition, I would like to add few remarks in my national capacity.

Madam Chair,

At the outset, I wish to recall that this year marks the 20th anniversary since the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime entered into force, on 29 September 2003. Two decades on, the framework given by this Convention and its three Protocols remains as relevant as ever.

We have seen meaningful steps forward in the fight against transnational organized crime, as shown by the many investigations on vast international criminal networks. Stunning results for example were recently achieved in a complex investigation against the Calabrian mafia, N'drangheta, resulting in a large number of arrests, searches and seizures in eight different European countries. The operation put an end to trafficking of literally tons of drugs from South America and to a flourishing money laundering activity spread all over the world. None of this could have been achieved without a shared criminal framework and efficient instruments of international cooperation.

Allow me to recall, in this regard, two side-events co-organized by Italy during this week, to which you all are invited. The first will provide a glimpse of the INTERPOL Cooperation Against 'Ndrangheta (I-CAN) Project, a useful mean for enhancing cooperation and targeting this particular mafia type organization at the international level. The second looks back at the work of the international community, which enabled the adoption of the Palermo Convention, including the propulsive role played by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. The event will give the opportunity to take stock of the status of the Convention's implementation and to look at the future.

Let me also announce that the Italian Government is planning a high-level event, next September 29, to celebrate the 20th anniversary of UNTOC. The event will be held in Palermo, where the Convention was opened for signature, with a focus on the Mediterranean.

Madam Chair,

32nd session of the CCPCJ. Agenda Item 3 – General debate. Statement by ITALY, delivered by Amb. Alessandro Cortese

Moving to the topics of this year thematic discussion, on access to justice, I wish to recall the extraordinary work of reforms that Italy has undertaken over the past year and is still implementing, in the field of criminal justice, civil justice and, more broadly, the judiciary, with the aim of making the entire justice system overall more effective and efficient.

Indeed, crime prevention requires effective and fair procedures, carried out within a reasonable time and in full respect of human rights. It requires fair, proportionate punishment, aimed at the rehabilitation of the convicted person. It also needs a civil justice system that works, succeeding in settling disputes before they escalate into the arbitrary exercise of one's reasons or into much more serious crimes. Last but not least, it demands that victims have an easy and equal access to justice and a timely response to their needs, so as to enhance trust in institutions.

Madam Chair,

Let me conclude by underscoring the invaluable support that UNODC has provided to Member States since its establishment. UNODC plays a central role in providing technical assistance in a broad range of areas, with a distinctive expertise provided by its Terrorism Prevention Branch to address counter terrorism, strengthening national criminal justice systems and working on links between terrorism and other forms of crimes, organized crimes in particular. In order to update its mandate in this field, Italy has tabled, jointly with Austria and Indonesia, a draft resolution at this session of the Commission and we count on the support of all delegations to achieve this important goal.

Thank you, Madam Chair, and thanks to UNODC, with its Executive Director Madam Waly, for your strong leadership, which - I am sure - will ensure a productive and successful meeting.