



**ROMANIA
STATEMENT FOR THE HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT**

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

From the outset, please allow me to thank the Government of Japan and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for organizing the Crime Congress under these very difficult circumstances. We would like to express our gratitude for the Japanese team led by H.E Ambassador Takeshi Hikiyama for the dedication, patience and perseverance they have shown during these intense negotiations. I am honoured to be able to speak to you today in the framework of the high level segment about our priorities in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice.

I do not believe that it has ever been in our recent history a more stringent need for a global vision against criminality than today and in this context for an increased role of the United Nations, and UNODC in particular, with the aim to enhance multilateralism and build common solutions against criminality. And I say this in the context of a Covid -19 pandemic which has basically led to a digitalization of our current activities, including, unfortunately, an increased manifestation of transnational organized crime, in particular by using information technologies as tools to commit such offences.

When building our responses against crime we need to work at domestic level, but we also need to work at international level.

Romania has a robust internal legislative and institutional framework that allows to tackle criminality, including serious crimes such as transnational organized crime and corruption in an efficient manner. We are focusing on the prevention side, elaborating relevant strategies in the field of transnational organized crime and corruption and I would like to talk to you today briefly about these initiatives.

Romania, as a democratic European state, promotes an integrated, programmatic policy in the field of crime prevention, based on strategic documents aiming at strengthening institutional capacity, implementing and consolidating the most effective measures through a multi stakeholder approach while addressing the roots of the criminal phenomenon.

In this regard, our National Anticorruption Strategy (NAS) and the multiple good practices generated in this context represent some of the best tools we employ in fighting against corruption. The strategic document, in force between 2016-2020, provided a series of targeted measures based on enforcing existing anticorruption instruments, increased public confidence in the administration and the involvement of civil society in the decision-making process. For the following period, Romania intends to carry out an assessment process in order to identify the most successful tools, the sectors with intervention needs and the deficiencies, results that will inform the future NAS.

At the same time, against the backdrop of the growing organized crime phenomenon, Romania has recently designed a strategic approach in order to address and prioritize threats and vulnerabilities, correlate and increase the efficiency of preventing and

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combating mechanisms available in our country and last but not least, strengthen interinstitutional dialogue and cooperation. The draft National Strategy against Organized Crime constitutes an energetic, uncompromising and coherent instrument aiming at guaranteeing individual safety and at sustaining a social and economic environment developed in a rule of law climate. The Strategy includes prevention-oriented measures, focused on educating the population in organized crime related themes, in order to enhance intolerance for organized crime organizations and their activities. At the same time, some provided measures focus on organized crime victims' protection, interlinked with the subsequent necessity of social reinsertion.

But national endeavours alone cannot guarantee a safe way forward for us as part of the international community; we need to collectively prevent and combat criminality.

Whatever we are doing at domestic level in respect of tackling crimes cannot produce tangible results if we as States do not coordinate among each other through consistent international cooperation.

We need to ensure that crime does not pay and that there are no safe havens for criminals and in this context the UN Conventions, in particular UNTOC and UNCAC play a special importance for us. We underscore once again the value of these conventions that Romania has successfully invoked along the years in the context of international cooperation as legal background for extraditions and mutual legal assistance requests issued in cases dealing with corruption, money laundering, drug trafficking, trafficking in human beings, cybercrime and other serious crimes as defined by Art. 2 of UNTOC.

There are special provisions in the two Conventions that allow for extradition and mutual legal assistance using UNCAC and UNTOC as international legal basis, but also references to transfer of proceedings, special investigative techniques, joint investigation bodies, freezing and confiscation and even asset recovery.

We believe that through the implementation review processes that are currently undertaken with the support of UNODC we should obtain significant knowledge on the challenges in the application of these conventions, but also on the good practices developed.

The UN Conventions have still unexploited potential from this perspective and whatever we do in the UN setting in the next five years needs to be focused in particular on the facilitation of the application of these conventions by the practitioners.

From this perspective, we are really content about the fact that Kyoto Declaration gives due consideration to the needs of the practitioners and recognizes the valuable tools that UNODC has designed in the recent years for this very purpose. We are thankful to UNODC for their constant support and relentless work to make our work easier in an intricate crime landscape.

I am confident that if we continue along this line, allowing for a more pregnant presence of crime experts in our policy decisions, we will gain substantive input in our efforts to enhance the efficiency of the applicable UN instruments, aiming for tangible outcomes in respect of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.