

STATEMENT

**by H.E. Mr. LE Hoai Trung, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam at the High level segment
during the 14th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice
Kyoto, Japan, 07-12 March 2021**

Honorable President,

On behalf of the Government of Viet Nam, I congratulate you on being elected as President of this important Congress.

I would like to express my appreciation to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and Japan for the efforts the organization of this Congress, albeit the postponement of the event due to Covid-19.

Honorable President and distinguished delegates,

Viet Nam recognizes that this Congress would significantly contribute to the enhancement of domestic policies on crime prevention and criminal justice. The theme of this year's Congress is very relevant and fitting for the context we are in today, offering us the opportunity to reflect upon the progress we have made to date and to find ways to promote our cooperation in this particular area in the future.

During past years, transnational criminal activities have become increasingly sophisticated. Offenders now take greater advantage of globalization and rapid developments of modern technology. The outburst of unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic further creates loopholes for criminals to take action. In this regard, Viet Nam shares the view that such developments of criminal activities have their root causes in a wide range of underdevelopment issues and in return may pose impediments to our socio-security conditions, undermine the rule of law and impede sustainable development. To address these challenges on the way towards achieving the SDGs, Viet Nam endeavors to promote the rule of law by upholding a fair, humane, effective criminal justice system and making the strengthening of law enforcement an integral part of our national development strategy and policies.

Viet Nam has long considered people being the key driver in achieving the SDGs. For this reason, our National Strategy for Preventing and fighting crime period 2016-2025, with a vision to 2030 sets out a comprehensive approach to effectively suppress and prevent criminal activities, where early prevention of crime and re-offense via grassroots communities and educational methods are the linchpins. We make hard efforts to achieve a rule of law culture within communities and families by raising their sense of responsibility for legal compliance as well as voluntary prevention of crime.

Viet Nam also attaches great importance to both international and regional cooperation to combat transnational organized crime, as one of the focuses of this Congress. Our Government has been actively carrying out the Strategy for Judicial Reform towards 2020, with a strong emphasis on the signing and effective

implementation of multilateral treaties on criminal legal assistance, extradition and the transfer of sentenced persons with partner countries. Viet Nam actively joined hands with ASEAN member countries to improve regional frameworks for transnational organized crime prevention and criminal justice cooperation, strengthen the foundation for the rule of law and support sustainable development within the region. Viet Nam is willing to work with stakeholders to enhance cooperation, technical assistance and share good practices in this field.

On the particular issue of drug-related crimes, we wish to call upon this Congress to further enhance drug control measures. Viet Nam fully supports the position of ASEAN and some member states on a zero-tolerance attitude towards drugs; being resolute against the legalization of drug use, striving for the realization of a drug-free ASEAN community; respecting the sovereignty of each country in choosing the optimal solutions which balance supply and demand reduction, in line with each country's historical, political, economic, social and cultural situations.

Honorable President, Excellencies and distinguished delegates,

Viet Nam welcomes the adoption of the Kyoto Declaration with important guidelines on crime prevention and criminal justice for the upcoming five years. Viet Nam will continue its active support for the promotion of the rule of law, advancement of the effective implementation of UN legal instruments in this field and the expansion of international cooperation in combating all forms of criminal activity.

Finally, I wish you all the best and our 14th Congress a great success.

Thank you./.