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Item 2 of the provisional agenda*

**Review of the implementation of the United Nations
Convention against Transnational Organized Crime
and the Protocols thereto****Declaration of the High-level Conference of the
Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM) on
“The Palermo Convention: the future of the fight against
transnational organized crime”****Non-paper by the Secretariat****I. Introduction**

1. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM), with the support of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), organized a High-level Conference on “The Palermo Convention: the future of the fight against transnational organized crime”, which was held in Naples, Italy, from 20 to 21 June 2022.
2. The High-level Conference brought together 220 participants and was used as a platform to discuss a series of important aspects in the fight against transnational organized crime, including the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto, as well as the role of the parliamentarians in efforts to effectively address related challenges.
3. The outcome of the Conference, namely its final declaration, is available on the website of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (Naples’ Declaration: “The Palermo Convention: the future of the fight against transnational organized crime” | Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (pam.int)¹) and was seen as an important contribution towards bringing the voice of the parliamentarians to the attention of the Conference of the Parties at its eleventh session. The executive report of the Conference referred expressly to the presentation of the Declaration to the Conference of the Parties at its session in October 2022.

* CTOC/COP/2022/1.

¹ www.pam.int/en/media/news/naples-declaration-palermo-convention-future-fight-against-transnational-organized-crime.



II. High-level Conference of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM) on “The Palermo Convention: the future of the fight against transnational organized crime”

Final Declaration of the PAM Presidency²

(Naples, Italy, 21 June 2022)

As President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM), together with PAM national parliamentary delegations, Ministers responsible for criminal justice systems, high-level representatives of Governments, experts, law enforcement and judicial authorities, representatives of the United Nations and other international organizations, and the academic world,

Having assembled in Naples from 20 to 21 June 2022, on the occasion of the PAM high-level conference entitled “The Palermo Convention: the future of the fight against transnational organized crime”, twenty-two years after the adoption and opening for signature of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (Palermo Convention) and nineteen years after its entry into force, to affirm our shared commitment to uphold the rule of law and make best efforts, within our respective mandates and expertise, to prevent and combat transnational organized crime in its different manifestations, and to elaborate the parliamentary contribution to the review process embodied in the Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the Convention and the Protocols thereto, by identifying, inter alia, ways and means of strengthening and improving national capabilities and international cooperation against organized transnational crime,

Reaffirming the importance of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme in promoting effective action to strengthen international cooperation in crime prevention and criminal justice, as well as of the work of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in the fulfilment of its mandate in crime prevention and criminal justice, including providing to member States, upon request and as a matter of high priority, technical cooperation, advisory services and other forms of assistance, and coordinating with and complementing the work of all relevant and competent United Nations bodies and offices in respect of all forms of organized crime,

Noting the memorandum of understanding between UNODC and PAM, signed on 16 December 2021, “to provide a framework of cooperation and understanding, and to facilitate collaboration between the PAM and UNODC to further their shared goals and objectives in regard to preventing and combatting crime, corruption, drugs and terrorism”,

Deeply concerned about the exponential growth of organized crime over the past decades and about its global reach, which constitute a threat to the security, stability, and wellbeing of our States and populations, and the strong connection between terrorism and organized crime,

Expressing grave concern about the negative effects of transnational organized crime on development, peace, stability and security and human rights, about the increasing vulnerability of States to such crime and about the growing degree of penetration of criminal organizations and their financial and economic resources into the economy (from the preamble of GA res. [76/187](#) – latest “omnibus crime resolution” of the General Assembly),

Calling upon all States to recognize the links, where applicable, between transnational organized crime activities and acts of terrorism, as acknowledged by the General Assembly in its resolution [55/25](#), and to apply the Convention in combating

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all forms of criminal activity which fall within its scope (from resolution 10/4 of the Conference of the Parties to UNTOC),

Alarmed by the high cost of transnational organized crime in both human and material terms, as well as by its effects on national economies, the global financial system, and the rule of law and fundamental values of democracy and human coexistence,

Emphasizing that transnational organized crime must be addressed with full respect for the principle of the sovereignty of States and in accordance with the rule of law as part of a comprehensive response to promote durable solutions through the promotion of human rights and more equitable socioeconomic conditions,

Emphasizing the continued relevance of the Convention and its Protocols, including in countering new, emerging, and evolving forms of transnational organized crime,

Recognizing that, thanks to its nearly universal adherence and wide scope of application, the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime offers fundamental legal bases for international cooperation to support the investigation and prosecution of crimes covered by those Conventions, including for extradition, mutual legal assistance and confiscation and asset recovery, and that it provides effective mechanisms that should be further implemented and utilized in practice,

Sharing with the international community the sense of urgency to address the new threats posed by the exploitation of information and communication technologies by criminals, including organized criminal groups often operating across borders,

Acknowledging that the COVID-19 pandemic has worsened economic and social gaps, providing organized criminal groups with new opportunities to carry out their malicious activities and stressing the importance of finding effective ways to address related challenges, including through the effective implementation of the Convention and the Protocols thereto, during and after the pandemic,

Stressing the importance, in the fight against transnational organized crime, of denying organized criminal groups the proceeds of their crime, and of the need to strengthen efforts, including through international cooperation, to address the economic dimensions and manifestations of transnational organized crime,

Welcoming the launch of, and the progress made with regard to, the review process of the Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto; *stressing the importance* of full participation by States parties in the Mechanism and the effective implementation of the Convention in all its aspects; and *recognizing* the potential for the Mechanism to serve as a basis for making recommendations to improve the effective implementation of the Convention and its Protocols, through, inter alia, the identification of needs for technical assistance, including legislative assistance, and the significant reinforcement of international cooperation among States parties, including in the Mediterranean and Gulf regions,

Commemorating all victims of organized crime, including those who have lost their lives fighting such crime, in particular law enforcement and judicial personnel, and paying special tribute to all those persons, such as Judge Giovanni Falcone, Paolo Borsellino, Vittorio Occorsio, and Pierre Michel, whose legacy lives on through our global commitment to preventing and combating organized crime,

Taking note with the appreciation of the conclusions reached by the high-level conference and the contributions of all the distinguished guests and participants to the debate, PAM,

1. Affirms that the fight against transnational organized crime is of high priority for PAM member countries, particularly the development and implementation, as appropriate, of comprehensive, evidence-based crime prevention

policies, national and local strategies and action plans based on an understanding of the multiple factors that contribute to crime, as well as addressing such factors in a holistic manner, in close cooperation with all stakeholders, including relevant international and regional organizations, the general public, the media, business, institutions, and non-governmental organizations;

2. Recognizes the need to join forces to address transnational organized crime at the regional, subregional and international levels, striving for convergence of national legal responses, in line with the constitutional principles and legal traditions of our countries, through the fully effective implementation of the Convention, and the Protocols thereto and consistent with international human rights and fundamental freedoms;

3. Is committed to actively participating in and contributing to the Mechanism for the Review of the Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto, with a view to assisting in the implementation of those instruments, identify and substantiate specific needs for technical assistance, share best practices and promote effective international cooperation;

4. Joins efforts and invests resources and concerted action in our countries to curb the social and economic impact of transnational organized crime, and its ability to infiltrate legitimate national economies, using violence and terror;

5. Acknowledges that preventive and reactive measures against transnational organized crime may vary from State to State and region to region, and should be directed at improvements in national capabilities, increased knowledge and shared experiences about transnational organized criminal groups and their modus operandi; and, bearing this in mind, devote particular attention to addressing, including through multilateral cooperation and partnerships, the increasing risks, challenges and impediments in the fight against transnational organized crime, in particular those stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic and its implications on, inter alia, the socioeconomic conditions of our countries;

6. Supports the design and implementation of strategies to counter transnational criminal organizations, which address the root socioeconomic causes that make populations more vulnerable to crime, both as active and passive actors, focusing on long-term impacts to ensure the development of capabilities in the field of law enforcement and criminal justice;

7. Recognizes the need to effectively address links between organized crime and other serious crimes, which fall within the scope of application of the Convention, as well as illicit financial flows related to proceeds of crimes covered by the Convention;

8. Is determined to promote tailor-made – yet coherent – approaches to preventing and combating transnational organized crime, taking into account local contexts, including by fostering among the general public a culture of lawfulness, cognizant of cultural diversity, based on respect for the rule of law;

9. Expresses its commitment to ensure that the gender perspective is always taken into consideration in the implementation of crime prevention and criminal justice policies, programmes, legislation, and other related action, as appropriate, to, inter alia, prevent all forms of gender-related violence, crime, and victimization, including trafficking in persons and gender-related killings, through analysis of gender-related specific needs and circumstances;

10. Recognizes the need to protect children and youth, with due consideration to their vulnerabilities, from all forms of crime, violence, abuse, and exploitation both online and offline, empowering them to become “active agents of positive change” in their communities through educational, cultural, recreational, sports-related programmes;

11. Encourages PAM national parliaments and governments to provide adequate resources and training to judicial and police authorities, as well as central and other competent authorities involved in international cooperation in criminal matters, in order to strengthen their capacity to prevent and combat transnational organized crime, provide assistance to the victims, including through ensuring their access to justice, improve criminal investigation processes and strengthen international cooperation;

12. Promotes enhanced cooperation to address and counter threats related to the exploitation of information and communication technologies by criminals, including organized criminal groups, and the continuous adjustment of their modus operandi in carrying out illegal activities; and undertakes that the law enforcement, criminal justice and other relevant institutions in PAM member States will effectively and appropriately employ new and advanced technologies as tools against transnational organized crime with adequate and effective safeguards to prevent the misuse and abuse of these technologies in this regard;

Finally, I wish to thank, on behalf of all delegates, the Minister of Culture, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Interior, the Presidency of the Campania Region, the city of Naples and its mayor, and the Italian authorities for having hosted this conference and rendered possible such a high-level debate and its recommendations for the effectiveness of international cooperation in fighting transnational organized crime efficiently.
