

In the name of God, the most Compassionate, the most merciful

Statement of the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran
Before
15th Session of Working Group on International Cooperation
(5 and 6 June 2024)

Agenda Item (2): The role and impact of technology with regard to international cooperation in criminal matters: opportunities, challenges and capacity-building needs.

Mr. Co-Chair;

I'd like to express our gratitude to you and the Secretariat for your dedicated efforts in leading and organising this meeting.

It is crucial that we consider the role and impact of technology on international cooperation in criminal matters in this Working Group. As we gather to discuss this significant topic, we are reminded of the unprecedented opportunities and formidable challenges that technology presents in the fight against transnational organised crime.

The advancements in digital tools and platforms provide substantial benefits and opportunities:

1. Enhanced Communication and Coordination: Digital communication tools and platforms have streamlined interactions between law enforcement across borders, facilitating faster and more efficient exchanges of information and intelligence. This has proven quite efficient in timely interventions and the dismantling of transnational criminal networks.

2. Data Sharing and Analysis: Advanced data analytics, artificial intelligence, and forensic technologies have changed the methods and efficiency of the collection, analysis, and sharing of evidence. This enhances the ability to track criminal activities, identify perpetrators, and gather robust evidence admissible in courts of law.

3. Capacity Building and Training: E-learning platforms and virtual training provide law enforcement officers and judicial officials with access to the latest knowledge and skills necessary to combat evolving criminal methods. This could be beneficial for countries with limited access to training resources.

Mr. Co-Chair;

The electronic transmission of international cooperation requests under the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) could play a pivotal role in enhancing the efficiency and speed of judicial assistance across borders. This digital approach facilitates the immediate exchange of information and evidence, crucial for preventing and combating transnational organized crime in a timely manner. However, the integration of technology in international cooperation is not without challenges. In this regard, several challenges that might be underlined are as follows:

1. Cybersecurity Threats: The increasing reliance on digital systems makes them vulnerable to cyberattacks. Ensuring the security of shared information, protecting sensitive data and confidentiality of transmitted data from unauthorized access or breaches is of paramount importance and needs to be addressed.

2. Disparities in Technological Capabilities: There exists a significant gap in technological capabilities and resources among countries. This disparity can hinder effective cooperation and create inequities in combatting transnational crime. In order to promote the role of electronic transmission of international cooperation requests, it is of utmost importance to lift the technical barriers related to the compatibility of electronic systems across jurisdictions and prepare the prerequisite infrastructure.

3. Legal and Regulatory Frameworks: The rapid pace of technological advancement often surpasses the development of corresponding legal and regulatory frameworks in countries. It is essential to harmonise these frameworks internationally to ensure the effective and lawful use of technology in criminal justice. Overcoming the differences in national legal frameworks regarding electronic evidence and establishing a universally accepted instrument for electronic information and communication technologies will play a significant role in achieving our goals to fight against transnational organised crime.

Mr. Co-Chair;

To make efficient use potential of technologies for international cooperation in criminal matters and address its challenges, by respecting national sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs, targeted capacity-building initiatives are essential:

1. Technical Assistance and Infrastructure Development: Providing technical assistance, transfer of technology and development of technological infrastructure to developing countries will support them in fighting transnational organised crime effectively and achieving the objectives of the Convention by enabling more equitable and suitable participation in international cooperation efforts.

2. Training and Skill Development: Ongoing training programs tailored to the latest technological trends and tools and developing new strategies to address emerging technological challenges to fight transnational organised crime should be readily available to law enforcement and judicial personnel worldwide. That in turn will enhance their capability to effectively utilise technology in their international cooperation.

3. Legal Harmonization and Policy Development: Encouraging international collaboration to harmonize legal and regulatory standards related to technology use in criminal justice will facilitate smoother and more effective cooperation.

4. UN Collaboration Platforms: the UN bodies including the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) should play a crucial role in building capacity, exchanging information, and developing international norms and standards among countries.

Mr. Co-Chair;

The Islamic Republic of Iran is committed to using technology to improve international cooperation in criminal matters. We believe it's important to take a comprehensive, inclusive and balanced approach that allows countries to take full advantage of technological advancements while also addressing the challenges that come with them. By working together and avoiding politicization of international cooperation, and by providing capacity-building and shared

expertise, we can effectively fight transnational organized crime and work towards a more secure and just world.

Last but not least, The Unilateral Coercive Measures, which flagrantly violate the fundamental principles of international law and grossly infringe Article 4 of the Convention as well as its underlying purpose in promoting cooperation among states, impaired international cooperation in combating Transnational Organised Crime, prevents effective remedy for victims of organized crime and stymies allocation of essential resources for fighting such crimes. These illegal measures would only embolden organized criminal groups to expand their criminal activities and jeopardize the rule of law, transparency, and accountability at the regional and international levels. To this end, removal of all Unilateral Coercive Measures is of high priority and urgency in effectively countering Transnational Organised Crime and achieving the purposes of the Convention.

Thank you for your attention!