



**Statement by Ambassador Barbara Žvokelj, Permanent Representative of Slovenia to the International Organizations in Vienna, on the occasion of the Tenth Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime
Vienna, 12 - 16 October 2020**

Thank you, Mr. President,

Let me start by congratulating you, Ambassador, for assuming the role of the President of the Tenth Session of the Conference of the Parties. I wish you every success in discharging your duties.

In addition to the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union, I would like to make a few remarks in my national capacity.

Mr. President,

In spite of the extraordinary circumstances, this is a special occasion for several reasons. We are celebrating the 20th anniversary of the UNTOC. This is an important milestone and after long years of negotiations, we have the opportunity to adopt the review mechanism, which will provide valuable support to the implementation of the Convention.

Mr. President,

I would like to focus on two priority areas for Slovenia. Firstly, let me reiterate my Country's support for the Trafficking in Persons Protocol. We are convinced that one of the vital aspects of combating trafficking in persons is the provision of support to the victims of this flagrant crime. The key to achieving this is the effective implementation of existing norms, as well as cooperation of all relevant stakeholders and competent national and international institutions. In this context, the aspect of adequate support for victims, especially if connected to violence against women and children or sexual abuse, is of utmost importance. The victims need to have access to uncomplicated procedures to report these crimes and appropriate treatment in proceedings connected to law enforcement. This must include appropriate institutional training of relevant stakeholders. In addition to this, adequate support programs, which transcend mere criminal proceedings, need to be provided for.

Mr. President,

Secondly, Slovenia is convinced that the international community is in need of an ambitious approach when it comes to preventing and combating environmental crime. In times of

looming climate change we are obliged to be able to effectively combat violations that directly impact our environment. It is vital that we do our homework and react on national, regional and international level. In this connection, States parties to the Convention should ensure that the perpetrators of transnational environmental crimes are held accountable through effective and dissuasive sanctions.

In addition to this we believe that the Conference should give appropriate attention and adequately address illicit trafficking in falsified medical products, which seems particularly important in these turbulent times.

With this in mind, Mr. President, I wish us all a safe, healthy and productive Conference.

Thank you.