



**STATEMENT
BY**

DR J PITSWANE

**DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**AT THE TENTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO
THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL
ORGANISED CRIME**

AGENDA ITEM: 1(F)

GENERAL DISCUSISON

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**Mr President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,**

At the outset, allow me to join other delegations in congratulating you on your election as President of the 10th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

Please be assured of the full support of my delegation during this meeting.

South Africa associates itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the African Group and the Group of 77 and China respectively.

Mr President,

South Africa, like many other State parties, is not immune to the threats posed by transnational organized crime, and which is increasing in intensity. As the international community faces this phenomenon, we recognize that Transnational Organized Crime constitutes a threat to national security and economic development, and also undermines the rule of law. Criminal networks are increasingly using sophisticated methods and adapting to different circumstances, thereby proving to be agile in carrying out their illegal activities. This development makes this form of crime even more challenging for law enforcement agencies to effectively eradicate it, particularly at a time when the world is grappling with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Organised criminal syndicates, whether dealing in rhino poaching, human trafficking, drug dealing, cybercrime, illicit mining and the illicit economy in general, are driven by an insatiable need to make money. The proceeds of crime will, therefore, remain the ultimate objective in the value chain of a transnational organised crime, and an aspect that needs to be addressed.

Given the above, the South African Government has prioritized enhanced regional and international cooperation in conducting joint operations that has

significantly contributed to efforts aimed at eliminating the scourge of transnational organized crime.

Mr President,

My Government remains resolute in curbing transnational organized crime within the framework of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime and its related Protocols. It is my delegations' firm belief that inadequate coordination that often exists at national, regional and international cooperation between law enforcement agencies has negatively impacted the fight against transnational organized crime.

Since ratifying the Convention in 2004, South Africa has put in place legislative and institutional mechanisms to ensure compliance with its international obligations. These include the promulgation of the Prevention of Organised Crime Act; the Financial Intelligence Centre Act; the Preventing and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act; the Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act. At the same time, our authorities have established the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation to oversee the implementation of these legislations. The collaboration and cooperation between the national law enforcement agencies comprising the South African Police Service, the Border Police and the National Prosecution Authority has resulted in high prosecution and conviction rates on crimes such as firearm smuggling, drug trafficking, rhino poaching, human trafficking and illegal mining as well as other related environmental crimes.

In cooperation with the Regional Office of the UNODC in Pretoria, South Africa has undertaken a number of programmes such as the global action against trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants, as well as regional cooperation in combating money laundering, in line with the Convention and its Protocols.

South Africa as a member of the Southern Africa Regional Police Chiefs Co-operation Organisation (SARPCCO) is seized with jointly combating cross

border crimes in the region, working closely with our neighbouring countries. This has greatly enhanced police to police cooperation in the tracking, investigation and prosecution of some of the most serious crimes in the region.

At international level **Mr President**, South Africa continues to exchange information and best practices through the platform provided by INTERPOL with a view to tracking some of the worlds' most wanted criminals. We value the role played by the UNODC for the technical assistance and capacity building provided to member states in addressing serious transnational organized crime, some of which contributes to predicate offences as outlined in Article 2(h) of the Convention.

Mr President

New and emerging forms of crime particularly cybercrime, illegal mining and wild-life crimes, continues to present challenges to developing countries. In the area of Cybercrime, the work done by the Intergovernmental Expert Group on Cybercrime has been very important. We welcome the adoption of General Assembly Resolution 74/247 which mandated the international community to formulate an international legally binding instrument on cybercrime that takes into account the interest of all UN member states.

Pursuant to the Resolution adopted by the 28th Session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice entitled "Combating transnational organised crime and its links to illicit trafficking in precious metals and illegal mining including by enhancing the security of supply chains of precious metals", South Africa together with the UNODC and our international partners will be holding a virtual side-event on the same subject matter on 13 October 2020 at 14h00. The objective is to look at ways of implementing the outcomes of this Resolution, particularly the proposed Action Plan in strengthening the security and integrity of the precious metals supply chain. You are all invited.

Mr President

South Africa also welcomes Conference Resolution 9/1 which adopted the Procedures and Rules for the Functioning of the Mechanism for the Review of the Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crimes and the Protocol thereto. To this end, my delegation calls for sufficient funding of the Mechanism from the regular budget of the UNODC with the understanding that any shortfall shall be supplemented from the unburdened extra- budgetary resources and voluntary contributions so as to preserve its impartial and non-intrusive nature. We are convinced that predictable and assured funding will ensure an efficient review mechanism.

In conclusion **Mr President**, my delegation supports calls for the establishment of Central Authorities in the jurisdictions of member states, with the specific intention of expediting the process of mutual legal assistance requests in instances where the request is urgent. My delegation strongly believes that where the existing UN instruments provide for binding obligations, such should be given priority in requests for mutual legal assistance with the results that bureaucratic procedures are eliminated.

I thank you