



ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS
AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
JAURÈSGASSE 3, 1030 VIENNA

Statement

By

The Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran

On

Crimes that Affect the Environment

Mr. Chair;

I'd like to commence by expressing our gratitude and appreciation to you and the Secretariat for the dedicated efforts in leading and organizing this meeting.

Mr. Chair;

Crimes against the environment perpetrated by organized criminal networks accrue illicit material gains for criminals and to the detriment of not only human beings, but the very environment we live in which may also endanger the vital livelihood of future generations. Taking into account the deleterious impacts of such crimes on the environment and the importance of appropriate measures in this regard, we are of the view that preventing and combating crimes that affect the environment through collective and inclusive actions and within a technical context could lead to proper responses to these crimes and in supporting Member States efforts in investigation and prosecution of criminals involved. In this respect, addressing crimes that affect the environment under the auspices of the United Nations provides Member States with the opportunity to actively engage in lively discussions on this topic is promising in fighting such menace.

We reaffirm that efforts in addressing, preventing and combating crimes that affect the environment should be in accordance and consistent with the fundamental principles of international law and the principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, in particular, sovereign equality and territorial integrity of States and the principal of non-intervention in the domestic affairs of other States. In the same vein,

every State has, and shall freely exercise, full and permanent sovereignty over all its natural resources.

The scale and nature of crimes that affect the environment have been well recognized in different international forums, while there is no commonly accepted definition of environmental crime. The lack of a universal definition of environmental crime could be attributed to the diversity of crimes that affect the environment and their inter-linkages with other criminal activities, as well as the dearth of knowledge of such crimes and the low priority often accorded to them. Therefore, we would like to highlight the primary role and responsibility of States in defining their policies and strategies to prevent and combat crimes that affect the environment. We further highlight that crimes that affect the environment which has no agreed definition vary by, *inter alia*, context and geography; therefore one-size-fit-all approaches may not always be practicable.

Mr. Chair,

Protecting the environment and fighting crimes against this unparalleled yet finite resource of survival for all beings also requires protecting, respecting and fulfilling the right to development, since development enables States to fight more effectively these crimes and given its key role in meeting environmental needs of generations, it also contributes to protection of environment against crimes through ensuring the overarching requisites for supporting implementation of national policies in a balanced manner.

By the same token, considering the immense practical utility of technological tools and equipment in fighting crimes that affect the environment, enhancing the development and transfer of relevant new know-how and innovative technologies, in particular to developing countries should be among measures to be taken at the international level in combating crimes that affect the environment. Concrete measures in this area would be determining in employing new and advanced technology by law enforcement and other criminal justice institutions.

Mr. Chair;

Highlighting the significance of seizure, recovery and return of proceeds of such crimes and assets effectively combating crimes that affect the environment, I would like to recall that the very resolution pursuant to which this meeting is being held, has urged States to adopt concrete and effective measures to recover and return the proceeds of such crimes in accordance with the UNCAC and UNTOC and has emphasized removal of obstacles to applying measures for the recovery and return of those assets and proceeds. As such, I would like to reaffirm the importance of recovery and return of proceeds and assets, in particular, those related to corruption and organized criminal groups so as to ensure an effective fight against crimes that affect the environment.

I thank you