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Technical assistance

Provision of technical assistance to States in the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto

Report of the Secretariat

I. Introduction

1. The present report has been prepared pursuant to resolution 5/6, entitled “Implementation of the provisions on technical assistance of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime”, adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime at its fifth session. In that resolution, the Secretariat was requested to report to the Conference at its sixth session on the provision of technical assistance to help States to implement the Organized Crime Convention and the Protocols thereto at the global, regional and national levels.

2. Also, in that resolution, the Conference endorsed the recommendations of the meeting of the Open-ended Interim Working Group of Government Experts on Technical Assistance held on 19 and 20 October 2010, in which the continued need for technical assistance to ensure the effective implementation of the Organized Crime Convention and the Protocols thereto was acknowledged; the strategic and comprehensive approach to technical assistance adopted by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), incorporating the elements of the Convention and its Protocols, was endorsed as a key priority in integrated and regional programmes; and the need for UNODC and States parties to continue to coordinate the delivery of technical assistance with all relevant international and regional organizations, and with bilateral assistance entities, was emphasized.

* CTOC/COP/2012/1.



3. The present report provides updated information on the status of technical assistance activities provided by UNODC to States since the fifth session of the Conference, held in Vienna from 18 to 22 October 2010.

II. Strategic approach of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to delivering technical assistance pursuant to the Convention and the Protocols thereto

4. UNODC continues to pursue a strategic approach to the technical assistance it provides to States through its thematic and regional programmes in order to counter organized crime and trafficking. The thematic programme on transnational organized crime for the period 2011-2013 reflects the policy guidance and global framework of UNODC, including mandates, guiding principles, methodologies and tools. Within the overarching framework of the thematic programme, UNODC global programmes of direct relevance to technical assistance delivery in the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols include the Global Programme for Strengthening the Capacities of Member States to Prevent and Combat Organized and Serious Crime; the Global Programme against Money-Laundering, Proceeds of Crime and the Financing of Terrorism; the Container Control Programme; the global programme against trafficking in persons; the global programme against the smuggling of migrants; and the global programme on firearms.

5. Regional programmes complement the thematic programmes by adopting a bottom-up approach, thus ensuring:

(a) Full ownership by partner countries through alignment with national and regional policies and priorities;

(b) A move from a project-based approach to a programmatic approach;

(c) More effective cooperation and planning with other United Nations entities and multilateral partners and stakeholders.

6. During the period 2010-2012, the regional programmes of UNODC were expanded to include Afghanistan and neighbouring countries, the Arab States and West Africa. Additional regional programmes for Southern Africa and South Asia will be launched in 2012. Although each programme is developed on the basis of the specific needs and priorities of the region, the fight against organized crime and trafficking is considered an essential element and constitutes the first pillar of work in all instances.

III. Strengthening international judicial cooperation to fight transnational organized crime

7. In its decision 4/2, the Conference of the Parties requested the Secretariat to seek ways to assist States in overcoming technical and legal obstacles to the use of videoconferencing. A meeting of experts was held in Vienna in October 2010, during which international best practices were explored and a guide for practitioners on the use of videoconferencing in criminal proceedings is currently being drafted.

8. In 2011, a significant contribution to the strengthening of international judicial cooperation in Central America was made through the creation of the Network of Prosecutors against Organized Crime (REFCO). REFCO is a forum for sharing knowledge and experience on common issues regarding organized crime and drug trafficking, such as modes of investigation, money-laundering, interception of communications and witness protection. Its structure provides for the development of standardized capacity-building with prosecutor training institutes, exchanges between offices within the region, promotion of the exchange of information and intraregional training.

9. REFCO works on two levels: on one level, it strengthens the structures of national public prosecutors' offices, providing them with technical advice on the implementation of national legislation, the organization of organized crime prosecution units and the exchange of information with other specialized units and by carrying out specialized training, as cooperation is feasible only when solid national structures are in place; on the second level, it promotes common and coordinated activities so that prosecutors become acquainted with each other and can build trust and confidence in order to, ultimately, exchange information on cases.

10. A wide range of specialist training courses for public prosecutors has been devised and delivered, and a series of practical technical guides produced. Training has been coordinated and delivered for prosecutors from Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama. Recently, the public prosecutors' offices of the Dominican Republic and Mexico have joined REFCO, and Belize and Colombia had participated regularly in activities of the Network prior to becoming members.

11. In order to gain support, REFCO has coordinated its initiatives with the council for prosecutors in Central America, the Consejo Centroamericano de Ministerios Públicos, of which all the attorneys general in the region are members. The result of such coordination has a clear impact on its decisions, for example, the Dominican Republic was invited to the REFCO plenary meeting in November 2011, and joined the Network immediately afterwards. At the last session of the council, in May 2012, it was agreed that the Dominican Republic would join the council and that the council would change its name to the Consejo de Ministerios Públicos de Centroamerica y República Dominicana.

IV. Strengthening criminal justice responses to organized crime

12. In 2010, the Governments of El Salvador and Honduras approached the United Nations to request assistance in addressing increasing levels of organized crime and entrenched impunity. Both Governments acknowledged the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala as a model from which lessons could be drawn for a tailor-made approach that would address their specific needs. In March 2011, experts from the Global Programme for Strengthening the Capacities of Member States to Prevent and Combat Organized and Serious Crime, in collaboration with the UNODC Regional Office for Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean, the Department of Political Affairs of the Secretariat and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), conducted a mission to El Salvador in

order to assess the situation related to organized crime, with a view to identifying how assistance could be provided to strengthen, in particular, the country's law enforcement and prosecution capabilities.

13. From 1 to 5 May 2012, UNODC led a technical mission to Honduras, with the Department of Political Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and UNDP, with the objective of analysing national capacities for investigating organized crime and serious human rights violations and exploring possible areas in which the United Nations could provide assistance. The mission was a follow-up to an exploratory mission conducted from 11 to 14 December 2011 and led by the Department of Political Affairs, in which UNODC had participated. That mission had concluded that there was a clear need to strengthen the institutions responsible for the investigation and prosecution of organized crime and serious human rights violations, and to establish a model for investigating organized crime and serious offences that incorporated special investigation techniques, based on existing national legislation.

14. The development of criminal intelligence has played a pivotal role in the strengthening of criminal justice responses to organized crime. The recruitment by UNODC of a full-time criminal intelligence expert and trainer in 2011 has led to the organization of training programmes for intelligence analysts in Jordan, the Philippines, Seychelles and Thailand. In addition, in April 2012, UNODC conducted the first strategic analysis training for students from Costa Rica and Panama on serious and organized crime threat assessments as a means of enhancing national capabilities to determine strategic policies on organized crime. The training was based on the publication by UNODC and the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) entitled *Guidance on the Preparation and Use of Serious and Organized Crime Threat Assessments* (available from www.unodc.org/documents/afghanistan/Organized_Crime/SOCTA_Manual_2010.pdf).

15. Panama is one of several countries in Central America and elsewhere that are moving from traditional civil law criminal proceedings to adversarial systems of prosecution. Since 2011, UNODC, through its Global Programme for Strengthening the Capacities of Member States to Prevent and Combat Organized and Serious Crime, has provided advice to the public prosecutor's office of Panama on the process, which will be gradually introduced in the country over the next three years. Such advice has covered, for example, the drafting of a strategy, the organizational structure and training.

16. UNODC has also been actively engaged in the international response to piracy off the coast of Somalia. Under its counter-piracy programme, UNODC is providing substantial support to countries in the region in their efforts to bring suspected pirates to justice. UNODC has worked with a number of countries of the subregion that have shown willingness to carry out prosecutions of suspected pirates, principally Kenya, Mauritius, Seychelles and the United Republic of Tanzania. Support is being provided to police, courts, prosecutors and prisons to ensure that the trials of Somali suspects are effective, efficient and fair.

17. UNODC has continued to review national legislation and has worked with States to amend action plans, where necessary, to support piracy prosecutions; supported prosecutors through training and office improvements; developed court facilities, including through the construction, refurbishment and provision of

technical equipment such as videoconferencing equipment; delivered witnesses to trial, provided interpretation and funded defence counsel; substantially improved prison conditions, expanded capacity through the construction of additional prison blocks and reduced overcrowding through remand reviews; and provided police forces with office and technical equipment as well as with training on improved practices and evidence-handling. As a result, significant improvements have been made to local criminal justice institutions. The skills that police, prosecutors and court staff have gained with regard to piracy prosecutions can be applied to all cases, and improvements in prisons benefit detainees.

18. In further support of the international effort to investigate piracy crimes, UNODC is assisting the financial intelligence units of the countries in the region in following the financial flows from piracy. In its work to counter illicit financial flows from piracy off the coast of Somalia, the Global Programme against Money-Laundering, Proceeds of Crime and the Financing of Terrorism, in cooperation with the UNODC Regional Office for East Africa, has begun work to build capacity to counter money-laundering and to raise awareness of money-laundering and issues related to the financing of terrorism. The Global Programme organized an international conference on the issue that was held in Nairobi in May 2011. Many of the recommendations from that conference have been used as a foundation for the working group on financial flows (working group 5) of the Contact Group on Piracy off the coast of Somalia. A second conference organized by the Global Programme was held in Djibouti on 14 and 15 December 2011. It focused on improving cooperation between law enforcement agencies and alternative money remitters such as hawalas and mobile financial services providers. The Global Programme continues to play a central role in information-sharing and contacts facilitation for working group 5 of the Contact Group on Piracy off the coast of Somalia.

19. Throughout 2010 and 2011, over 30 countries, including Botswana, the Cook Islands, Kazakhstan, Namibia, Palau, Tajikistan, Tonga and Vanuatu, received tailor-made advisory services and other technical inputs relevant to the implementation of international standards to combat money-laundering and financing of terrorism and to enhancing legislation on asset forfeiture. In Central Asia, a series of seminars on the implementation of Kazakh legislation on countering money-laundering and terrorist financing, as well as international cooperation, were held in 2010. With the assistance of a mentor on the legal aspects of countering money-laundering, legislation to counter money-laundering and the financing of terrorism was adopted in the Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

20. A training workshop for financial intelligence unit members and other officials on the applicability of the freezing provisions contained in the West African Economic and Monetary Union uniform law on the financing of terrorism was held in Senegal in March 2010.

21. The success and fairness of criminal proceedings and trials depend, to a large extent, on the reliability and admissibility of forensic evidence. Forensic services are integral to the provision of objective, verifiable and timely information at different stages of the criminal justice process. UNODC has implemented a variety of technical assistance programmes to assist States, including in post-conflict settings, in developing or strengthening integrated and sustainable forensic services.

Those programmes include the development of forensic capacity and infrastructure with regard to the evidence process between the crime scene and the courtroom, standardized training programmes, legislative support for governing authorities, awareness-raising for stakeholders and the provision of equipment, tools and materials.

22. The support provided by UNODC in forensic science further provides for the development of capacity and enhancement of the performance of national forensic laboratories, as well as the development of standards and working procedures to ensure that scientific findings are used effectively in support of criminal justice, law enforcement, and health-care and regulatory systems.

V. Improving law enforcement cooperation and inter-institutional coordination

23. The West Africa Coast Initiative constitutes a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach to the delivery of technical assistance in the region. It contributes to peacebuilding initiatives and security sector reform, mainly through law enforcement capacity-building, cross-border collaboration and criminal justice reform at the national and regional levels. It is a joint initiative of several United Nations entities and INTERPOL and has proved to be successful in complementing the different mandates of the implementing partners and in delivering technical assistance.

24. One of the primary programme components under the West Africa Coast Initiative is the establishment of specialized multi-agency transnational crime units, aimed at strengthening national and regional inter-agency cooperation, particularly among countries with limited capacities that are in post-conflict and peacebuilding situations.

25. The development of the West Africa Coast Initiative in each of the four pilot countries (Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone) has varied, depending on each national context. In addition to the transnational crime unit component, technical support has also been provided in different areas, including forensic and legal assistance, drug demand reduction and combating money-laundering and drug abuse. The following are the main achievements pertaining to the transnational crime unit component in each of the four pilot countries:

(a) In terms of the transnational crime units, Sierra Leone is the most advanced of the four pilot countries, as its unit is fully functional, is well equipped and has been successfully conducting investigations. In 2011, the unit investigated 113 criminal cases, including cases of trafficking in drugs, persons and firearms, and financial crimes, which have so far resulted in 25 convictions. Over the same period, over 1,800 kg of cannabis were seized. The unit has also begun to act on in-country fraud inquiries on behalf of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Serious Organised Crime Agency of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. An assessment has been conducted to extend the INTERPOL I-24/7 information exchange system to the transnational crime unit and to airports and seaports;

(b) In Liberia, the transnational crime unit office has been set up and vehicles have been supplied to support its operations. A transnational crime unit management board has been appointed, and standard operating procedures, codes of conduct and a duty manual have been developed and are awaiting approval. Transnational crime unit personnel have undergone training in basic information technology and report-writing skills. Moreover, comprehensive legislation on drugs and organized crime has been developed, and discussion and subsequent enactment by the National Assembly are pending;

(c) In Guinea-Bissau, training has been provided to transnational crime unit staff and the equipping of the office will be completed shortly. The INTERPOL National Central Bureau has been upgraded and the I-24/7 system will be extended to the transnational crime unit and to airports and seaports. In addition, the Real-Time Analytical Intelligence Database has been delivered to the judiciary police, and training and equipment and mentoring have been provided to the financial intelligence unit. Recent political events have resulted in the temporary suspension of West Africa Coast Initiative activities in Guinea-Bissau;

(d) Côte d'Ivoire will be the last of the pilot countries to receive technical assistance under the West Africa Coast Initiative. A joint assessment mission was due to take place in May 2012.

26. An assessment mission to Guinea was conducted in April 2012, in preparation for that country joining the West Africa Coast Initiative.

27. The Airport Communication Project also demonstrates the benefits of inter-agency cooperation for strengthening borders and tackling transnational criminal activity. To date, 19 countries (Argentina, Benin, Brazil, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, the Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Jamaica, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa and Togo) have become part of the Airport Communication Project network. The Project focuses on the creation of joint airport interdiction task forces, which are specially trained in profiling and detection methodology. Secure communication between Airport Communication Project partners using the Customs Enforcement Network of the World Customs Organization and the INTERPOL I-24/7 system enhances their ability to share information and coordinate operational activities internationally. The project has already led to significant seizures of cocaine, cannabis, heroin, amphetamines and cash.

28. Through the global Container Control Programme, UNODC and the World Customs Organization continue to help build the capacity of law enforcement agencies to identify and inspect shipping containers that may be used for illicit purposes such as trafficking in drugs, weapons, explosives and environmental goods. This has been carried out through detailed assessments of container ports and the promotion of cooperation among law enforcement agencies through the creation of inter-agency port control units, which have been provided with extensive training on risk management and profiling.

29. The Container Control Programme also facilitates the exchange of operational information. It currently operates in seaports in 13 countries in West Africa, Latin America and West and Central Asia. The selected sites are located in major drug-producing regions and/or along established maritime trade routes for the illicit trans-shipment of drugs and precursor chemicals. In 2011, seizures by participating

countries included 9,219 kg of cocaine, 30.9 kg of opium, 666.9 kg of heroin, 13,353 kg of cannabis and 36,245 kg of precursor chemicals. These figures demonstrate the effectiveness of the Programme in bringing together the various front-line enforcement agencies and in promoting and increasing the professionalism of officers. They also demonstrate the ongoing utilization of the intelligence systems that are available through the Programme.

30. UNODC training also contributed to strengthening the capacity of authorities to detect not only drugs and precursors but also a wide range of illicit commodities, including endangered species and copyright-protected material. There are plans to expand UNODC assistance in container control to 15 additional countries.

31. UNODC provided assistance to States to address the links between money-laundering and serious organized crime. The Office has placed six mentors in various subregions: in Southern Africa to strengthen asset confiscation procedures; in East Africa to build capacity to carry out financial investigations; in South-East and Central Asia to build effective procedures to counter money-laundering and the financing of terrorism; in West Africa to establish comprehensive regimes to counter money-laundering and the financing of terrorism, with a focus on the development and enhancement of financial intelligence units; and in Central America to build capacity among prosecutors and the judiciary.

32. National financial investigation training courses were delivered in Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Rwanda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Viet Nam, focusing on investigation skills and fostering close working relationships between police and prosecutors. In 2011, UNODC also conducted a series of train-the-trainer workshops in Bangladesh and Morocco for national trainers and to facilitate the creation of a sustainable curriculum on countering money-laundering and the financing of terrorism to be taught in their national law enforcement training institutions. Courses for financial intelligence unit analysts were delivered in Ethiopia and Rwanda, and two regional courses for such analysts were delivered in India in May 2010 for participants from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Eritrea, India, Kenya, Nepal, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania to develop knowledge and skills in the analysis of financial information in order to detect suspicious transactions related to money-laundering and the financing of terrorism. Training using mock trials, which are a practical tool that use countries' specific legal frameworks, has been provided in most Latin American countries since 2008 and was provided in Ghana in November 2011.

33. UNODC, in partnership with the World Customs Organization, piloted a course in mid-2011 to train customs services and other border control agencies to prevent cash from being smuggled across borders. The course covered new procedures and expanded on existing practice to teach practitioners how to identify cash couriers, interdict and investigate illicit cash movements and seize funds. The Global Programme against Money-Laundering, Proceeds of Crime and the Financing of Terrorism delivered the training in Indonesia and the Philippines.

VI. Assisting States in the development of programmes for the protection of witnesses and victims of organized crime

34. Support to States in building effective and efficient criminal justice processes, including victim and witness assistance and protection mechanisms, is a necessary part of ensuring good governance. The cooperation of witnesses in providing testimonial evidence is crucial to the investigation and prosecution of criminal cases, particularly cases of serious and organized crime. UNODC provides support for the development and implementation of witness protection laws, measures and special programmes, in order to ensure the protection of at-risk witnesses.

35. During the review period, UNODC continued to support the development of the Witness Protection Agency in Kenya through the placement of a mentor, attached to the office of the attorney general. Through that mentor, technical guidance and advice were provided on strategic and operational issues for the Agency itself, as well as for prosecutors and police officials. Training was also provided to members of the Kenyan Anti-Corruption Commission and the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission of Kenya. In addition, technical advice was provided to other countries in the region, including Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania, and assessments were carried out in Ethiopia, Mauritius, Namibia and the United Republic of Tanzania. Detailed technical assistance project proposals were developed for Namibia and the United Republic of Tanzania.

36. In 2011, UNODC provided assistance to OHCHR in order to develop a guide on gender issues relating to witness protection.

VII. Technical assistance in combating trafficking in persons

37. The normative work of UNODC on promoting the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and on capacity-building involves providing legislative assistance, strategic planning and policy development to Member States, as well as strengthened criminal justice responses and protection and support to victims of trafficking in persons.

38. Throughout 2010 and 2011, UNODC carried out technical assistance activities addressing trafficking in persons in all regions, providing assistance to about 80 countries and building regional and interregional responses to trafficking in persons.

39. To support its capacity-building activities, UNODC continued to produce technical publications aimed at strengthening the criminal justice response throughout the period under review. The publications included the “Human trafficking first-aid kit for law enforcement agencies”, which may be used by front-line actors to correctly identify and immediately respond to cases of trafficking in persons before specialists can be mobilized.

40. In October 2011, UNODC launched the first global database on cases of trafficking in persons. It provides immediate, public access to officially documented instances of the crime in order to increase the visibility of successful prosecutions

and at the same time promote awareness of the realities of the crime. The database enables users to take experiences and court decisions from other countries into account when dealing with issues related to trafficking in persons, to consult on practices in different jurisdictions and to broaden their knowledge of trafficking in persons. Through its global training initiative to combat trafficking in persons, developed under the Global Programme against Trafficking in Human Beings, UNODC strengthens national capacities to respond more effectively to the crime of trafficking in persons. Training curricula address core elements of the criminal justice response to the crime, utilizing specialized UNODC training materials and delivery by a multidisciplinary and international team of expert trainers. The training activities are based on the modules and strategy of the UNODC *Anti-Human Trafficking Manual for Criminal Justice Practitioners* and are targeted at criminal justice practitioners in general and law enforcement officers in particular, as well as at providers of support to victims. The workshops are designed to equip criminal justice practitioners to respond appropriately to the complex challenges of trafficking in persons. Workshops were organized in Fiji, Mali and Ukraine and for practitioners from Portugal, who participated in a train-the-trainer workshop in Vienna.

41. A detailed report on the activities of UNODC to promote and support the implementation of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol, including technical assistance, has been prepared for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties at its sixth session (CTOC/COP/2012/2).

VIII. Technical assistance to enhance the response to the smuggling of migrants

42. Since 2010, UNODC has provided technical assistance to States at the global, regional and national levels in the following areas: prevention and awareness-raising, data collection and research, legislative assistance, strategic planning and policy development, criminal justice system response, protection and support, and regional and international cooperation.

43. A detailed report on the activities of UNODC to promote and support the implementation of the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, including technical assistance, has been prepared for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties at its sixth session (CTOC/COP/2012/5).

44. In 2011, UNODC produced an awareness-raising and training film for criminal justice practitioners entitled *Ways and Means*, as well as a short video clip to raise awareness of the crime of smuggling of migrants.

45. In South-East Asia, UNODC is developing a voluntary reporting mechanism to support the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime and enhance the collection and analysis of data on the smuggling of migrants.

46. The *Model Law against the Smuggling of Migrants* (available from www.unodc.org), published in October 2010, provides a comprehensive set of provisions to assist States in adopting adequate legislation to implement the

Protocol. They are designed to be sufficiently flexible and to meet the specific needs of a diverse range of legal systems. It was developed in consultation with a wide range of experts from origin, transit and destination countries.

47. Since 2010, UNODC has provided legal advice and assistance to legislative drafters, judges and prosecutors through the analysis of gaps in legislation in West Africa, North Africa, Central Asia, Central America and East Africa. The Office has also organized a regional legislative drafting workshop in East Africa.

48. In 2012, UNODC released the *International Framework for Action to Implement the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol*, a technical tool developed through expert consultation to support States' strategic planning and policy development.

49. The *In-depth Training Manual on Investigating and Prosecuting the Smuggling of Migrants* was published in 2011 to assist in building the capacity of States to respond effectively to the smuggling of migrants. The *Basic Training Manual on Investigating and Prosecuting the Smuggling of Migrants* was adapted to the specificities and needs of Mexico and Central American countries.

50. Since 2010, UNODC has also supported States in enhancing their criminal justice capacities through the delivery of workshops in North Africa, West Africa, Central Asia and South-East Asia.

IX. Trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition

51. As the only global legally binding instrument on firearms, the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, establishes a global framework for States to control and regulate licit arms and arms flows, prevent the diversion of arms into the illegal circuit and facilitate the investigation and prosecution of related offences. By addressing both the legal and illegal aspects of firearms, the Protocol sets out a comprehensive regime that regulates the licit flow of arms in order to prevent and combat trafficking without hampering legitimate movements.

52. Pursuant to resolution 5/4 of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, UNODC has continued to raise awareness and to promote and develop technical assistance tools in order to encourage wider ratification and implementation of the Firearms Protocol. A global project on firearms was launched by UNODC in 2011, with a view to promoting and facilitating the ratification and implementation of the Firearms Protocol, and assisting States in that endeavour. In the framework of the global project, UNODC has started to implement a project, funded by the European Union, on countering transnational illicit arms trafficking through the implementation of the firearms protocol. The project focuses on the following activities:

- (a) Awareness-raising and promotion of the ratification of the Firearms Protocol;
- (b) Development of specialized tools;

(c) Development of legislation to strengthen the legal and regulatory framework on firearms and promote regional harmonization of laws and practices;

(d) Capacity-building and training in order to reduce the availability of illegal firearms and strengthen the regulatory framework on firearms, especially in marking, record-keeping, transfer controls, collection and destruction of firearms;

(e) Training and capacity-building with a view to strengthening the criminal justice responses and promoting effective international cooperation and information exchange for combating trafficking in firearms and related offences;

(f) Gaining increased knowledge on transnational firearms trafficking patterns and enhancing civil society engagement.

53. The project on countering transnational illicit arms trafficking currently covers 15 countries from West Africa, South America and the Caribbean (Argentina, Benin, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Burkina Faso, Chile, Gambia, Ghana, Jamaica, Mali, Mauritania, Paraguay, Senegal, Togo and Uruguay). Several other countries have requested assistance under the global project on firearms and UNODC is currently seeking additional funds to expand it to those countries.

54. The UNODC *Model Law against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition* (available from www.unodc.org) was published in 2011. It was developed between 2009 and 2010 during workshops attended by experts and practitioners from different countries and regions, in order to better assist State parties in translating the treaty language of the Organized Crime Convention and the Firearms Protocol into domestic legal provisions, and help them to strengthen their legislative regimes on firearms in a manner consistent with the Protocol. Its broad range of provisions cover preventive firearms control measures, for example with regard to manufacturing, record-keeping, deactivation, international transfers of firearms and related brokering activities, as well as penal and procedural measures derived from the Firearms Protocol and the Organized Crime Convention. Currently available in English only, the Model Law is being translated into all the other official languages of the United Nations.

X. Emerging crimes

55. In pursuit of the goals of preventing and combating trafficking in persons for organ removal, protecting and assisting victims of that crime and promoting international cooperation, UNODC is developing a toolkit to assess the incidence of trafficking in persons for the removal of organs at the national and regional levels. The toolkit will provide guidance and facilitate the sharing of knowledge and information among policymakers, law enforcers, judges, prosecutors, health-care and victim service providers and members of civil society who are working at different levels towards the same objectives.

56. During the reporting period, UNODC continued to provide technical assistance in the area of preventing and combating cybercrime within the framework of its global programme on cybercrime. Details of technical assistance delivered in that area are included in the report of the Secretariat on technical assistance provided to States in the application of the Organized Crime Convention to new

forms and dimensions of transnational organized crime, prepared for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties at its sixth session (CTOC/COP/2012/7).

57. Fraudulent medicines are increasingly a cause of concern around the world, but particularly in developing countries. They present a public health risk, putting users at risk of severe health consequences or even death. Fraudulent medicines have become an important source of income for organized criminal groups, with extremely high returns and low risks of detection and of criminal liability. A combination of weak regulatory systems, poor-quality control mechanisms and insufficient or non-existent national legislation make less developed nations a prime target of criminal conduct related to fraudulent medicines. Trafficking in fraudulent medicines has become a major threat to States, most of which do not have the capacity, knowledge and resources to effectively respond to and prevent this crime.

58. In its resolution 20/6, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice requested UNODC to assist Member States in building capacity to disrupt and dismantle the organized criminal networks engaged in all stages of the illicit supply chain of fraudulent medicines, in particular distribution and trafficking. UNODC proposes to develop a phased strategy, together with relevant counterparts from the international community, private sector and civil society organizations, that is designed to ensure a coherent and consistent approach that covers a wide spectrum of activities to strengthen the criminal justice response.

XI. Conclusion

59. Criminal organizations do not hesitate to exploit any opportunity to profit from their illicit activities, quickly identifying and adapting advances in technology, and seeking out and exploiting weaknesses in systems and regimes. Given the comparative wealth of powerful criminal groups, many States find themselves lacking the capacity to respond in the most effective way.

60. During the period under review, UNODC continued to deliver a broad range of technical assistance over a wide and constantly evolving thematic portfolio. Through thorough and systematic independent evaluations of its programmes, the Office strives to ensure that its approach to technical assistance delivery provides high-quality and cost-effective support to Member States.