

**Statement by Mrs. Mukta D. Tomar, Counsellor on Agenda Item 108 -  
Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, Agenda Item 109 –  
International Drug Control at Third Committee of the 58<sup>th</sup> Session of  
the UN General Assembly on October 14, 2003**

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation thanks the Secretary General for the comprehensive reports on agenda items 108 and 109 respectively on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, and International Drug Control. We wish to thank the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, for his introductory statement highlighting developments in the global crime and drug situation and his views on the response of the international community to the related challenges.

We welcome the measures taken to reorganise the Office on Drugs and Crime with emphasis on the need to pursue an integrated approach to drugs, crime and terrorism issues. We hope that this would enhance its effectiveness in dealing with the recognised nexus among drugs, crime and terrorism. The work of the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the UNODC is particularly important, given the high priority attached by the international community to the fight against terrorism, and the need to ensure that efforts of the international community to deal with this scourge does not slacken. There is an urgent need to enhance the capacities of the Terrorism Prevention Branch, in particular through increased budgetary resources.

India has consistently and unequivocally supported all efforts, particularly through the United Nations, to combat terrorism. There can be no justification for terrorism on any ground - religious, political, ideological or any other. The fight against terrorism has to be global, long-term, comprehensive and sustained. Strengthening of international cooperation is vital, with the mounting awareness that the battle cannot be restricted simply to the perpetrator, but needs to encompass states which sponsor, support or provide safe haven to terrorists; as well as the fact that ad hoc and selective actions have a limited chance of success - compartmentalisation of action in terms of regions or organisations is ineffective in attaining the comprehensive objective of eradicating terrorism.

Mr. Chairman,

India has taken extensive measures to prevent and combat terrorism in the country. We have put in place all necessary legislative and administrative measures within the country, and entered into bilateral and regional arrangements to fight terrorism. However, terrorism is a global phenomenon. Terrorists are highly networked and fully conversant with the latest technological advancements and use them to their advantage. Narcotic drugs have been their main source of funding. The close nexus between international terrorism on the one hand and trans-national organised crime, illicit drugs, money laundering, illegal arms transactions and illegal movement of

nuclear, chemical and biological materials on the other pose a serious threat to international security, and needs to be monitored carefully. We are pleased, in this context, to note the Global Programme against Terrorism that the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has initiated. We fully support the programme and look forward to cooperating closely with the international community in the battle to eliminate terrorism.

Mr. Chairman,

Given the need for strengthened international cooperation, my delegation is pleased to note two significant recent developments: first, the entry into force of the Convention against Transnational Organised Crime on September 29, 2003 that India has already signed and is taking steps to ratify; and which will provide, as the Executive Director stated, a new framework for international cooperation. The second is the successful conclusion of the negotiations in Vienna on the draft Convention against Corruption, in which India participated actively.

India has entered into bilateral agreements with several countries to combat terrorism and organised crime. These agreements provide the framework for exchange of information, mutual legal assistance and development of joint programmes to counter terrorism and organised crime. India has strong domestic legislation to deal with these issues. This has been strengthened further with the enactment earlier this year of the Money Laundering Act, 2002.

Mr. Chairman,

The high-level Ministerial segment held during the 46<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs sought to assess progress made and difficulties encountered in the implementation of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action adopted at the 20<sup>th</sup> special session of the General Assembly in 1998. We welcome the adoption of the Joint Ministerial Statement which reiterated measures and provided direction to the action that need to be taken, *inter alia*, in the areas of demand reduction, judicial cooperation and money laundering. India concurs with the assessment that the goals of the special session remain distant and the challenges ahead can be met only if countries stay on course and redouble their efforts to implement the commitments. India is fully committed to the Political Declaration and Plan of Action and has taken significant steps to implement the specific goals and targets required to be obtained by all states in 2003 and 2008 to address the world drug problem.

National efforts, however intense, cannot deal comprehensively with the drug problem. Bilateral, regional and international collaboration is essential in this area. Extradition treaties, mutual legal assistance treaties and other specific arrangements are essential to support efforts in eradicating drug trafficking, and organised crime and terrorism. In particular, Law Enforcement cooperation is a significant emerging area in the field of international cooperation. We look forward to working with members of the international community to achieve our common goal of a world free of the blights of narco-terrorism and organised crime.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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